# THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way"—however dimly,
and lost among the host—as does the evening
star to those who tread their path in darkness.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

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## THE TEMPLE OF PERMANENT PEACE

On the 20th of this month the entire Buddhist world will celebrate the anniversary of three important events in the life of the Buddha. The magical influence of this Master-Mind who lived six centuries before the Christian era continues to work its miracles in the hearts of hundreds even to-day. The power of the Buddha's life and the influence of his teachings are impressing many in materialistic Japan; in war-worn China; in Ceylon, in Burma and in India; in Tibet and in Turkestan. And in the West as well, in not a few European and American minds is that influence active.

What is the nature of the power which this great Soul exerted on thousands of free-willed men and women during half a century of most glorious ministry? What is the kind of potency which the memory of his life and the contact with his teachings evoke even to-day in human consciousness? Has that life and have those teachings any definite message for our confused and disintegrating civilization? War and bloodshed prevail in our midst; wars are being waged and blood is being shed in the names of Right and Justice and Liberty, and Progress and Culture. How did this Man win in his lifetime and how does he continue to win human heads and hearts—millions upon millions of them? Not by the sword did he win the kingdom of Peace for himself and for his numberless followers. He said in starting the very quest for that Peace :—

> My chariot shall not roll with bloody wheels
> From victory to victory, till earth
> Wears the red record of my name.

The religious philosophy which he left to humanity has produced for over twenty-five hundred years generations of good and unselfish men. His is the only *absolutely bloodless* religion among all the existing religions: tolerant and liberal, teaching universal compassion and charity, love and self-sacrifice, poverty and contentment with one's lot, whatever it may be. No persecutions, no enforcement of faith by fire and sword have ever disgraced it. No thunder-and-lightning-vomiting god has interfered with its chaste commandments; and if the simple, human and philosophical code of daily life left to us by the greatest Man-Reformer ever

known should ever come to be adopted by mankind at large, then indeed an era of bliss and peace would dawn on Humanity.

The whole of civilization is so busy *doing* things that it has no time even to enquire into the *raison-d'être* of its busy-ness. War is being waged by two great democratic countries in Europe and the reason given is that Hitlerism must be destroyed. What they will do when it is destroyed is not clear, and more—the political leaders of Downing Street and the Quai d'Orsay refuse even to discuss the subject.

Politics has become the religion of the people everywhere—even in India it threatens to do so if the rising tide is not stemmed. Gandhiji tries to hold the balance between spiritual idealism and political action, but the Western world-forces glamour the bulk of young India, who wish to divorce the Soul, religion, from its body, the politics which Gandhiji has been trying to build upon the basis of the existence and the potency of that Soul.

In one aspect of his labour of love Gandhiji may well be said to be carrying on the work of the great Buddha. To suit modern conditions Gandhiji engages in political actions, but his whole emphasis is on moral elevation—on men and women rising on the stepping-stones of their dead psychical selves to living in noetic peace and spiritual strength. The Enlightened One did not work in the political field but engaged himself in impressing the hearts of men by the example of a noble life and in influencing their minds by sage precepts. A transmutation took place in large numbers of people and prepared the way for the era of Mauryan glory.

It would be well for India to recall to-day the technique of the Tathagata—of Him who followed in the footsteps of his Predecessors. The Buddha paid scant attention to his earthly pedigree and emphasised the truth that he was "not of a mortal line", but of "descent invisible, the Buddhas who have been and who shall be". He called upon all men not to bother about their outer conditions, birth-status and body-caste, etc., but to trace their own heavenly pedigree. By looking away from the world of objects where shadows glamour and entice and by turning to the world within and behind, where the purpose of existence is to be seen and the right mode of living can be learnt, men and women find what they are seeking—Sva-raj, of which Sva-raj the political freedom of Hindusthan is but an emanation, an aspect.

The Buddha taught that he who is not loyal to the world of Nirvana cannot be truly patriotic towards the country of his birth. Modern patriotism shows fidelity to a geographical territory, imprisons the ideal of brotherhood in skin of a particular colour, and in other similar expressions enhances the differences and divisions between man and man. Spiritual patriotism does not war against another country separated by a mountain range or a flowing river; does not put on superior airs because it speaks a particular tongue. All lands are but parts united in one Earth, all tongues but children of the One Mother Tongue from which even the language of the Gods and its sister tongue of Avesta were born.

The world needs to-day the overthrow of false patriotism, worked up to a war-pitch by nationalistic politicians. The evil force obsessing false patriotism is greed—the sense of possession, the urge

to get more. Wars of to-day are said to be between the haves and have-nots; that is, they are based on false concepts of gaining, accumulating and using wealth, principles of economics as false as they are immoral, as the disastrous consequences reveal to those who have eyes to see. The Buddha's way of poverty, also recommended by Gandhiji, has a message for the modern sense-ridden civilization, controlled by bankers and book-makers, by profiteers and business magnates. In the view of the true Economists such as Buddha and Jesus, to whose school Gandhiji belongs, an individual is not the absolute and autocratic possessor of his wealth; he is a trustee who holds his possessions for the common good. So with a nation—be it an imperialistic giant or a humble genius—each must learn to share with all its raw products as its polished culture.

Having found out the fallacy that any nation can prosper and live in peace when others are struggling against poverty, that any Empire, however large, can hold itself together in proud isolation, careless of the interests of small neighbours, European peoples are thinking of a Federated Europe; but in the process of time federated continents will prove as futile as isolated nations and will bring about wars of still more ruinous proportions. Federated Europe against Federated Africa, or Federated America against Federated Asia! A Federated World should be the aim of all right-hearted peoples.

Wars impoverish humanity. Peace enriches it. Hatred corrupts beauty, virtue, truth. Wars will cease not by wars, but by justice, by the sense of duty which recognizes the rights of all, including oneself.

This message of the Buddha, given over two thousand five hundred years ago, has a most practical bearing for the world of to-day. Not politics divorced from spiritual realities can save our world; the Teachings of the Buddhas contain the key to the Temple of Permanent Peace.

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"And if the Koliyas", asked the Blessed One, "persist in drawing off this water, which is the gift of Gods and demons, what will come of it?"

"Slaughter and dire penalties", answered the Sakyas; and their gaze was that of lions coming to battle together.

"Then the season of sowing and of planting the young rice, paddling it firmly down in the soft mud, will pass idly, for ploughman and sower will be ashes on the burning-ground! Mother and child will perish of hunger, and the wild beasts of the forest will roam through your fields!"

"But our faces will be blackened", urged one of the Sakyas, "if to the threatening words of these base ones we make not answer as Kshatriyas should—with clash of spear and winging of fiery arrows."

The Lord heard him, or perchance heard him not—so swiftly did he ask this question: "This water for which you would shed men's lives—is it tethered in its place, as men tether a goat where it should feed?"

"By no means. It is flowing and makes no stay in any pool or shallow."

He said then: "Let the Koliyas for this day have freedom of drawing water, and let the Sakyas dig their channels for them. Even so tomorrow let the Sakyas draw water, and the Koliyas dig. Are the white shoulders of the mountains a well which men have made? There is water for all, and when both have drawn for their day the river will be flowing still. And in three weeks will the rains brim its vessel from shore to shore and far over your fields."

—*The Youngest Disciple* by EDWARD THOMPSON

# LIGHT IN ISLAMIC MYSTICISM

## I.—LIGHT AND ILLUMINATION AMONG THE EARLY ṢŪFĪS

[This is the first of a series of articles by **Margaret Smith** who has made Islamic Mysticism her speciality. Our readers are familiar with her various studies on the subject in earlier volumes of THE ARYAN PATH. We fully agree with her remark : " I feel that the teaching of the mystics overrides all barriers of race and nationality and that it contains a message of peace and hope for a troubled world, which is much needed at the present time."—ED.]

The conception of God, the One Reality, as Light, and of an inner light within the human soul by which it becomes conscious of its relation to the Divine as a ray of that Essential Light, is found in Islamic Mysticism from the beginning.

It was no new conception, but one derived from many sources and found in many faiths. Light embodies the idea of glory and splendour, it is infinite in its manifestation, omnipresent, unchangeable, the source and condition of life and activity and beauty. It is small wonder that the celestial luminaries should have been worshipped in Babylon and Phœnicia, or that the Egyptians and Greeks and Romans should have found a place in their pantheon for a Sun-God, the source of life, and for a Moon-Goddess, symbol of Wisdom. Nor is it surprising that Light should have been set over against Darkness, to represent the spiritual and the good in opposition to the material and the evil, by the Zoroastrians of Persia and by others who followed them.

To the early Hebrews, the glory of God was represented by the Shekina, the Divine Radiance visible by day and night, yet hidden within a cloud lest mortal eyes should be blinded by that unearthly glory. They thought, too, of the wings of that Shekina as being wide enough to enfold all humanity. The Hebrew Scriptures are full of the praise of Light, the first of all things to appear after the eternal night which had rested upon the abyss. The summons of the prophet is : " Arise, shine : for thy Light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." " In Thy Light ", sings the Psalmist, " shall we see light ", the teaching of the Ṣūfīs long afterwards. Wisdom, too, is identified with Light in the Apocrypha.

"She is the brightness of the Everlasting Light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God—more beautiful than the sun and above all the order of the stars : being compared with the light, she is found before it."[1]

The saint is described as " the morning star in the midst of a cloud and as the moon at the full. As the sun shining upon the temple of the Most High and as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds."[2]

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[1] *The Wisdom of Solomon*, 7. 26.

[2] *Ecclesiasticus*, 50. 6. *Cf.* the Persian mystic Rūmī on the Divine Beloved :

He comes, a moon whose like the sky ne'er saw, awake or dreaming
Crowned with eternal flame no flood can lay."

(Translated by R. A. Nicholson)

With this we may compare the words of the Persian Ṣūfī Hujwīrī, who likens the lover of God to a sun shining in a cloudless sky, and, quoting the words of another Ṣūfī, says that the combination of the light of the sun and the moon is like the purity of Love and Unity, when these are mingled together. He adds that, to be sure, the light of the sun and moon is worthless beside the Light of the Love and Unity of God, and they should not be compared, but that in this world there is no light so splendid as that of these two luminaries. That earthly light cannot be clearly seen by the eye, but the heart of the mystic, by the light of gnosis and love and union, can see the glory of God and while still in this world can penetrate into the mysteries of the world to come.

The same conception of Light as representing Reality and the Eternal Wisdom, whereby the human soul is also enlightened, is found in Greek thought. The poet Pindar, writing in the fifth century B.C. of the transience of human life, adds :—

> "But when a glory shines from God descending,
> Then rests on men a sunbright splendour-sheen
> And life serene."[1]

Plato, a century later, in his *Republic* urges that true education should lead the soul to turn away its "eye"—the spiritual vision—from the darkness in which it was born towards the Sun of Truth, to which it is really akin. This conception comes still more to the fore in Neo-Platonism and there is no doubt that the early mystics of Islam drew much inspiration from this source.[2]

It was probably from Plotinus that the Ṣūfīs gained their idea of God as the "Light of Lights" (*nūr al-ānwār*). Plotinus saw the need for a Light which is God Himself. The One, he says, is a "Light before light, an eternal irradiation resting upon the intellectual realm", and again, the life in the Divine Intellect is the Primal Light, at once Light-giver and that which is lighted. The human soul he describes as "a light springing from the Divine Mind and shining about it, in closest touch with its Source". Man strives to know the dignity of the intellect and its light and splendour and the value of that which is beyond the intellect, that is, the Light of Lights, the Perfect Beauty, and Supreme Splendour.[3] Plotinus says :—

"We may know that we have attained to the Vision when the Soul has suddenly taken light, the light which is from the Supreme and is the Supreme. This is the true end set before the Soul, to take that light, to see the Supreme by the Supreme, and not by the light of any other principle : for that which illumines the Soul is That upon which it looks."[4]

The Ṣūfīs, in their turn, insist that the Light of God can be seen only by His Light. Then, says Plotinus, it will be given to us to contemplate Reality and ourselves as they really are, radiant, full of light, indeed as pure light itself, having become God, united with the Light.[5] He makes it plain that God is

[1] Translated by A. S. Way.

[2] It is noteworthy that the name of *Ishrāqiyyīn* (the Illuminated) is the name given by Ṣūfī writers to the Platonic philosophers.

[3] *Theology of Aristotle* (so-called), p. 44. Really a Neo-Platonic treatise translated into Arabic in the ninth century A.D., of which the Ṣūfīs made great use.

[4] *Ennead* V, 3 : 2, 8, 9, 17.

[5] *Ennead* VI, 7 : 9.

the Source of all lesser lights, which receive illumination in their several grades, an idea taken up later and developed by al-Ghazālī.

The Hermetic literature and Gnosticism may also have contributed something, and there is no doubt that the mystical teaching of the early Christian Church contributed not a little to the Ṣūfī doctrine. Clement of Alexandria, in the second century, taught a Christian gnosis, urging men to tread the mystic Path which would lead them from darkness into light.

"Cast off the ignorance and the darkness that blinds our eyes, and sing to God, the Real Existent, 'Hail, Light!' For to us, buried in darkness, bound in the shadow of death, Light has shone from Heaven, purer than the sun, sweeter than our life here. That Light is Life Everlasting; whatever has partaken of it lives! Night fears the light and sinking down in terror makes way for the Divine Day. All has now become sleepless Light and sunset has joined hands with sunrise. For the Sun of Righteousness is present with all men equally and has changed sunset into sunrise and turned Death into Life."[1]

St. Augustine in the fourth century, writing in his *City of God* of the soul's ascent by way of purgation and illumination, says that the incorporeal soul is illumined by the incorporeal light of the Wisdom of God, as the body of the air is illumined by corporeal light.

Dionysius the Areopagite, so-called, a Christian theosophist of the fifth century, regarded God as Essential Radiance, the Morning Star, illuminating to contemplate. The soul, he teaches, by unceasing renunciation, can be so purified from the defilements of sin that it can ascend to the Ray of the Divine Darkness, which is in truth the Unapproachable Light of the Presence of God.

"Every ray of illuminating light which proceeds from that Light helps to restore the soul to perfection and to union with the One. Then it can contemplate the Simple Unity of Uncreated Light and become receptive of the Primal Light and, itself radiant, give radiance to others . . ."

So those who enter into the Divine Light themselves become deified[2].

From all these sources, therefore, especially Persian, Semitic and Greek, Islam derived the idea of God as Light, and this idea is found even in orthodox Islam and notably in the famous "Light-verse" in the *Qur'ān*, which declares that

"God is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth: His Light is like a Niche wherein is a Lamp: the Lamp within a Glass: the Glass like unto a glittering Star. From a blessed Tree is it lit, an Olive-tree neither of the East nor of the West, the oil whereof would be almost luminous, even though Fire touched it not: Light upon Light."

And with the Light of Supreme Goodness is contrasted the Darkness of evil and of ignorance in a succeeding verse:

"But as for the Infidels, their deeds are like Darkness massed upon a fathomless sea, billow overtopped by billow and above them the clouds: Darkness upon Darkness: wherein if a man stretch forth

[1] Translated by D. Pym.

[2] For a full account of the teaching of Dionysius see THE ARYAN PATH, November, 1936. There is a beautiful prayer for Light contained in the East Syrian Liturgy: "Thee, the True Light of Lights, Who feedest light from Thy Light and dwellest in the excellent Light, which no man hath seen or can approach unto: Thee, we beseech, even we who are weak and sinful, irradiate the darkness of our minds by Thine unspeakable Light, so that the lamps of our souls, being enlightened with the oil of mercy and of pity, we may rejoice in the joy of Thy Countenance, Thou who didst create the Light in Thy loving-kindness and dost order the darkness in Thy wisdom."

his hand, he shall hardly see it. He to whom God doth not appoint light, no light at all hath he."[1]

These verses have aroused the greatest interest among commentators. Among the Muslim traditions ascribed to the Prophet Muḥammad was the declaration,

"God is veiled by Seventy Thousand Veils of Light and Darkness : were He to withdraw them, then the Glory of His Aspect would surely consume those who looked upon Him."

The Prophet is also said to have prayed,

"O Light of light, Thou art veiled from Thy creature and it does not attain to Thy Light. O Light of light, Thy light illumines the people of heaven and enlightens those upon earth. O Light of all light, Thy Light is praised by all light."

But although this prayer is said to have been given to the Prophet by the Archangel Gabriel, it is more likely of Ṣūfī origin. It is said also that the Prophet declared, "Fear the believer, for he sees by the Light of God." Another of his sayings was, "When God wills good to his servant He kindles a light in his heart and the sign of that light is his separation from the abode of vanity and turning towards the abode of eternity." A traditional invocation among Muslims is : "I invoke Thee by the Light of Thy Countenance." Another Islamic tradition is one which states that God said unto David, "The mark of the spiritually-minded is that they no longer walk in darkness, for I am the Light of their hearts."

The Ṣūfīs gave to these Qur'ānic verses and these traditions a mystical interpretation, explaining the "niche" as the heart of the mystic, which is, therefore, the dwelling-place of the Divine Light. But it is only within the heart of one who has trodden the Path of purification by asceticism that the light burns clearly and steadily : it is only the gnostic who realises that within him is the inner light (*baṣā'ir al-nūr*), by which he can see and apprehend the spiritual meaning of things. By the light of that gnosis the soul can see the mysteries which are hidden within itself and the Divinity which is hidden from the eyes of the ignorant and those who live after the flesh. The Ṣūfīs, at an early stage, were called the "Enlightened" (*al-nūruiyya*), because through purification the inner light was manifested in their lives. One famous Ṣūfī was named Nūrī, because by the light (*nūr*) of insight he was able to read the inmost thoughts of his disciples. He is related to have said, "One day I looked upon a Light and I did not cease to contemplate it until I became that Light."

Pure Light, therefore, which is to be identified with Pure Being, is regarded by the Ṣūfīs as the source of all true knowledge, the Light manifesting itself through various means and in varying degrees. One of the earliest Ṣūfīs to develop a doctrine of gnosis which regards it as the Divine Light within the heart was Abū Sulaymān al-Darānī, who died in 830 A.D. and was famed for his asceticism and his knowledge of the spiritual ills and the temptations which afflict the soul. "None", he said, "refrains from the desires of this world,

[1] *Sūra* 24 : 35, 40. These verses seem to be of Gnostic origin. There were certain people known to the Muslims as Sabeans, who upheld the opposition between Light and Darkness, and believed in a King of Light, the First, the Omnipresent, and an emanational theory of the dissemination of Light upon all other beings. The Sabeans recognised as prophets the Egyptian sages Agathodæmon and Hermes.

save him in whose heart there is a light which preoccupies him with the world to come." Again he said that when the gnostic's spiritual vision was awake, his physical vision was asleep, and that such a gnostic contemplated only the Divine. He describes Gnosis in words that are a reminder of Plotinus :—

"If Gnosis could be seen, all who contemplated it would die at the sight of its loveliness and goodliness and grace, and every radiance would seem dark beside that glorious light."

Antākī, a Ṣūfī teacher who lived in the ninth century, taught that all actions should be guided by knowledge and that true knowledge comes through the light of certainty by which God enlightens the heart of His servant, so that he beholds the mysteries of the spiritual world, and by the power of that light all veils between him and that world are removed, until at last, by means of that radiance, he attains to the contemplation of the Invisible.

Ḥārith al-Muḥāsibī, who appears to have studied under Antākī, also wrote of the inner light in the mystic's heart (*nūr-al-qulūb*) and drew a contrast between light and darkness, saying,

"Nothing is harder upon impurity than Light, but the light is only an illumination to the heart if the servant is awake and alive to it, but if he is neglectful he dies and is in darkness and his light is extinguished ; nothing is more grievous to impurity than light and whiteness, evil can find no resting-place in the radiance of light."

Bayazīd al-Bisṭāmī, a Persian of Zoroastrian descent, who influenced Islamic mysticism in the direction of pantheism, taught that the soul, hampered by its association with not-Being, the Unreal, must pass through the stages of renunciation and asceticism before it can be fitted to receive and make use of the Divine gnosis. Of himself, when he had reached this stage, he said, "I have known God by means of God and what is other than God by the Light of God", and again, "He who discourses of eternity must have within him the light of eternity."

Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, an early Ṣūfī who taught in Mecca, Basra and Baghdad and wrote the *Qūt al-Qulūb* (The Sustenance of Hearts), had much to say of the mystic gnosis, which he called that light which God "casts" into the heart. Gnosis is the "light of certainty" and without that steady illumination the gnostic cannot attain to contemplation of the Unity. He includes in his teaching a prayer for Light :—

"O God, give me light in my heart, and light in my hearing, and light in my sight, and light in my feeling, and light in all my body, and light before me and light behind me, and light on my right hand and light on my left, and light above me and light beneath me. O Lord, increase light within me and give me light and illuminate me. Verily, to possess such light means to be contemplated eternally by the Light of light."

The Persian mystic poet Abū Sa'īd b. Abi'l-Khayr, who lived in the latter half of the tenth century, after a long period spent in self-purification and asceticism, said that a Light shone upon him which annihilated the darkness of his being. He, too, declares that long ages before the souls passed into their appointed bodies they dwelt in the Presence of God and He shed His light upon them and they rested tranquil in that light and were nourished thereby, and it is because of that light within them that souls turn towards God and desire to return to be reunited with that Primal Light.

But while these ideas are found in the writings of the earlier Ṣūfīs, the real founder of the school of Illuministic mysticism, which accepted the doctrine known as the *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq*—a fully developed theosophic doctrine of Light, was Ibn Masarra of Cordova (A.D. 883-931), a mystic and recluse who was responsible for a pantheistic speculative philosophy. He retired into the mountains and there taught his disciples an esoteric mysticism which had a permanent influence on later thought. His teaching was regarded as heretical by orthodox Muslims and for a time he went to Arabia to escape persecution. By the inner circle of his initiated followers he was regarded as a master of esoteric truth, whose teaching, given in symbolic language, contained an inner meaning which only the few could understand. In his teaching, "creation" was conceived as an emanation of Divine Light, produced by Love.[1] Ibn Masarra claimed to be a follower of Empedocles (of the fifth century B.C.), who was reckoned by the Muslims to be the first of the seven great philosophers of Greece. The Muslims believed that Empedocles had taught that the Divine Attributes were to be identified with the One Reality, that God was Pure Essence, transcending all multiplicity. The human soul was the link between this temporal world and the world invisible, and its nature, he held, was akin to that of light.[2] This doctrine of Light was accepted by the Islamic philosophers and especially by the *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā* (The Brethren of Purity), an association formed in Basra in the second half of the ninth century. They taught the Plotinian doctrine of emanation, the world being derived from the One True Light. Mind, they held, is related to the One as the sunlight to the Sun, and Soul to Mind as the moonlight to the sunlight. The human soul, they taught, attained to salvation by means of purifying knowledge. They aimed at "the assimilation of the soul to God, in the degree possible to man." The purified individual soul, after death, would return to the Primal Light, of which it was an emanation.

The mystic philosopher Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), 980-1037,[3] also conceived of God as Divine Light, ever-manifest for those who desire it, and hidden only from those concerned with material things. But the gnostic who brings the self under control and gives himself to meditation will find that his soul is illuminated by that Divine Light and that he is enabled to raise himself to that Light and so to attain to perfect sanctification. Then the light, which had seemed to be transitory, burns steadily and continuously and at the last the spark returns to the Eternal Flame and becomes one with it.

So the mystics of Islam adopted and developed this theosophic doctrine which regarded the One Reality and all derived from the One as Light, and knowledge as illumination from above, an illumination which is rather the kindling of a light already existent in the

[1] This was the theory also of a contemporary Ṣūfī, Mansūr al-Ḥallāj, who held that God in isolation displayed His glory in Love and then desired to manifest His love in "creation", the manifestation of Himself. Cf. THE ARYAN PATH, April, 1931, p. 216 ff.

[2] Among the sayings of Empedocles were, "By fire we perceive the Unseen Fire" and "Blessed is he who has gained the riches of the Divine Wisdom. Unhappy he in whose heart the imagination of the gods is veiled in darkness."

[3] See THE ARYAN PATH, August, 1932.

soul, because it is itself a ray from that Primal Light. This doctrine found its fullest development later in the writings of the great mystic teacher al-Ghazālī (known to the West as Algazel) who related it to the different stages on the mystic Path, and in the works of the Spanish mystic Ibn al-'Arabī (still called by modern Ṣūfīs "The Great Master") and of the later mystics of his school, by whom it was incorporated in their system of pantheistic monism.

MARGARET SMITH

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# MYTH IN RELIGION

A wholesome change in the attitude towards myths is brought out in a digest by E. McClung Fleming of the discussions of "Symbol and Myth in Religion" at the Annual Conference of the National Council on Religion in Higher Education, held in Keuka Park, New York, early last September. (*The Review of Religion*, January 1940) Western culture for the last three centuries has had little sympathy for myth as a valid content of knowledge or for mythical interpretation as a serious method of apprehending truth. Myth has been looked upon patronizingly by Western science as

> the pathetic attempt of a pre-scientific and uncritical mentality to explain natural phenomena....Modern historiography has regarded myth æsthetically as a rather amusing vagary of primitive poetic fancy without relation to primary religious experience. There are now signs, however, of a change of attitude.

Myth and symbol are coming to be recognized as a bridge between visible objects and temporal events and "the invisible realities and ideals of the eternal order".

> True myth is not the creation of the undifferentiated consciousness, whose product might be described as folklore, but of the mature religious experience of the two contrasting orders of reality.

Symbolic interpretation is being accepted as a characteristic way in which the mind synthesizes its experience and myth as "a primary form in which the creative and formative human spirit casts its insights".

> As a method of knowing truth, it is neither arbitrary nor fictitious, but a principled handling of materials not derived from mere sense or impulse. In rejecting it, Humian Empiricism, with its scheme of associating sense impressions, not only ignores an actual activity of mind, but is psychologically false.

An unwarranted distinction is, however, implied between the rôle of myth in the West and the part it plays in the East. The myth that carries conviction in the West is said to be that based on unique historical facts and "actual" events. Even though, as claimed, the Eastern time concept is of a wheel as compared with the Western straight-line concept of time, a factual foundation may with equal justice be claimed for the former's "hierarchy of values expressed in patterns repeated in many successive cycles and reincarnations".

In the East as in the West, "it is because the fact carries reality that it is a symbol: the historical fact is the necessary foundation of the metaphysical fact." Allegory and a mythical ornamentation around the kernel of tradition in no wise prevent that kernel being a record of real events. Mythology is in one sense ancient history, and in India, no less than in the West, there is history in most of the allegories and myths and real actual events are concealed under them. It is a hopeful sign that modern thinkers are coming back to the position of Plato that the ancient myths are vehicles of great truths worth the seeking.

# TWO PARADOXES OF OUR CONSCIOUS LIFE

[P. T. Raju, M.A., Ph.D., Sastri, is the author of *Thought and Reality : Hegelianism and Advaita.*—ED.]

Students of European philosophy are familiar with Zeno's paradoxes which deal mainly with the continuity and the infinite divisibility of space and of time. Students of logic are familiar with the paradox of inference, which is that if the conclusion represents something new, not contained in the premises, the inference must be false ; if, on the other hand, the conclusion contained nothing new no one would care to infer. Attempts have been made to solve these paradoxes and to bring out their implications, metaphysical or otherwise. Almost all these paradoxes are concerned with things finite. But there are two which are more profound, touching the very roots of our conscious being ; they are, therefore, important not only for philosophy but also for religion.

The first concerns our consciousness of deep sleep. In sleep we are not conscious of anything, but are ignorant of everything. Curiously enough, however, we say we know that we were ignorant of everything. This point has been the battle ground of the Advaita and other Vedantic systems. The Advaitin contends that because we are conscious of this ignorance, it is something positive. It is what he calls *Maya.* It is not the mere absence of knowledge, for here knowledge is present. We *know* that in deep sleep we were ignorant of everything. We could not have remembered that ignorance, the restfulness and the peace experienced in it, had we not been conscious of it. Remembrance of something that we have not known is never possible. Hence *Maya,* which is of the form of ignorance, is a positive entity. Those, on the other hand, who do not accept the reality of *Maya* maintain that the ignorance of deep sleep is the *absence* of all knowledge ; it is of a negative character only, not positive.

Let us consider the Advaitin's contention that the ignorance of deep sleep is not the absence of all knowledge, because there is knowledge of that ignorance. We do not in deep sleep know this or that thing, so particular cognitions of objects are absent. Yet deep sleep cannot be total annihilation of consciousness. If it were, there would have been none to witness the fact that we were not conscious of anything. As there is a witness to it, and as he must naturally be conscious, complete absence of consciousness cannot be characteristic of deep sleep. But then the conclusion which the Advaitin bases upon this experience cannot be escaped. What we are conscious of must be something positive. Nothing that is merely negative can be an object of our consciousness. Every absence must be an absence of something, or it cannot be understood and is meaningless. And the particular object of whose absence we are conscious must be positive. But the ignorance of which we are conscious in deep sleep is not the ignorance of this or that thing. It is undifferentiated and inarticulate. Our consciousness of it does not depend on the consciousness of anything else. Hence that ignorance itself must be positive. It is therefore a unique type of ignorance. The Advaitin turns it into a metaphysical principle and calls it

*Maya*, which is translated by the words "Nescience" and "Ignorance".

Wherein then does the paradox lie? It lies in the fact that during our unconsciousness we are conscious of our unconsciousness. I may be ignorant of the solution of a mathematical problem, and I may be conscious of my ignorance of the solution. There seems nothing strange in our consciousness of such ignorance. But in deep sleep, when we think that the ego is absolutely unconscious of everything, that is, where the distinction between subject and object practically disappears and thus where the "I" of the ego is not at all active, we are naturally surprised when we are shown that we were somehow conscious of our unconsciousness. How could the ego have known anything when it was unconscious?

In the Advaita philosophy this phase of our experience is not spoken of as a paradox, only because it has not presented itself to the Advaitin as a great problem. He has found in it merely a proof for his principle of *Maya*. But approaching the point from the angle of Western philosophy we cannot fail to see in it a peculiarly significant part of our experience which refuses to be pressed into the definite moulds of thought in the form of concepts. Taking this experience, we cannot say that the ego is simply that which knows itself while cognising objects. For in deep sleep no objects are cognised but the "I" cannot be said to be extinct. Again, we cannot maintain that consciousness is an activity or a quality of the ego; for we find in deep sleep no ego which is conscious of itself through its consciousness of objects. Yet there is consciousness of unconsciousness. Nor can we say that consciousness of objects is not necessary for the subject to know itself; for the normal form of consciousness is always the consciousness of objects, and never mere consciousness without objects. If we define consciousness in terms of consciousness in deep sleep, the definition will be inapplicable to our ordinary consciousness. If, on the other hand, we define it in terms of the latter form, it becomes inapplicable to the former. Again, because there is no ego whose activity or quality the consciousness experienced in deep sleep must possess, the ego must in its essence be of the nature of consciousness. That is, the ego cannot be a substance of which consciousness is an attribute, but consciousness itself must be the substance of which the ego is a form. Another conclusion that follows is that consciousness need not always be directed towards objects outside itself, though in the normal form it is so directed. When there is no object standing over against the subject, the latter tends to become infinite. Of course, in deep sleep, we cannot say that the "I" has become fully infinite, for there is unconsciousness standing over against consciousness and thus limiting it.

It may be said that the unconsciousness of which we are conscious in deep sleep can be regarded as the object of that consciousness, and that therefore the latter is not without an object. But even if that unconsciousness is the object of our consciousness, it must be admitted that it is a very peculiar type of object. It is not an object that stands opposed to our ego like other objects. It envelops our consciousness, darkens it. Yet consciousness is not destroyed, for it apprehends that unconsciousness. During deep sleep we do not distinguish ourselves from unconscious-

ness. It is a later consideration during the waking state that proves to us that we must have been distinct from our unconsciousness.

This paradox will be better appreciated if we consider another found in European philosophy in connection with the ontological argument for the existence of God. The latter paradox tells us that we are unconscious that we are conscious of the infinite being, whereas by the former we are told that we are conscious of our unconsciousness. According to the ontological argument, God exists because we have an idea of a perfect and infinite being. Perfection implies the possession of every attribute ; and existence being one of the attributes, if that perfect being lacks it, he cannot be perfect. Therefore he must exist. This argument has been stated in different forms by different philosophers but in all there is a transition from thought to being, from idea to existence. For this reason this paradox has been ridiculed by many writers. Kant, for example, asks whether to have an idea of twenty thalers in one's pocket is the same as having them. Similarly, to have an idea of a perfect being does not necessarily involve the existence of that being. All that can be said is that the idea of a perfect being, because perfection includes existence, must include the *idea* of existence.

In spite of the weak and fallacious nature of the argument, it has appealed to some of the best minds of Europe, and various attempts have been made to defend it. The truth of the argument, it is said, lies elsewhere than in the usual form in which it is expressed. If we do not have an idea of that which is perfect and infinite, it is not possible for us to pass judgment on the imperfections of the world. It is this idea that we use as a criterion for judging the finitude of things. But then how do we come to have that idea ? Is it obtained by removing the limitations of the finite ? Some answer in the affirmative. Generally, whatever ideas we have are obtained from the observation of things around us, which are all finite. Perfect and infinite things are never perceived by us. For us it is the ideas of things finite and imperfect that are positive. The idea of the infinite and the perfect is obtained by thinking of something which is *not finite and imperfect.* The idea is therefore negative and derivative, that is, produced by our mind's acting upon the ideas received through perception. If this contention is true, then the idea of God, like many other ideas so derived, may be false. For example, the idea of a chimera which is compounded of other ideas is false.

But it is pointed out, and reasonably, that the idea of a perfect and infinite being cannot be a derived idea, for it is presupposed by the idea of everything that is regarded as finite and imperfect. Hence we have to admit that the idea of infinity and perfection is original and not derived. On the contrary, the idea of finitude and imperfection must have been obtained by imposing limitations on the former idea. But then how is this idea obtained ? Not through sense-perception, and through derivation. It has then to be postulated that the idea is obtained through some immediate contact with a reality that is infinite and perfect. In this kind of experience the idea must involve existence, for otherwise the appearance of the idea cannot be accounted for. Thus the idea of God implied His existence.

The point of interest for us in this

argument is that it is proved that we are conscious of God though we seem to be unconscious of Him. Herein lies the paradox. We are unaware that we are all the time aware of God. We are here unconscious of our consciousness, whereas in the paradox previously considered we are conscious of our unconsciousness. What are the implications of this new paradox? If we are really conscious of God, the fact that we are surprised when told that we are always conscious of Him proves that the consciousness of God is somehow screened from us by our consciousness of the world. The two forms of consciousness must be different, and their directions or "intents" must be opposed. Further, our mind must have been specially adapted to the form of the consciousness of the world, for which reason we feel that we are unconscious of God. Mind apprehends objects which are different from itself. And, except in the case of subjective ideas where the question of truth or falsity does not arise, there is a chance of the idea being at variance with the object. The object in the present experience, namely, God, cannot be an object of mind, because it does not stand before mind. Yet it must have been known by us in some inexplicable way. This shows again that in some sense we are different from our mind. Nevertheless that part of us which knows God must be continuous with mind and somehow identical with it; otherwise the two experiences, the experience of God and that of the finite world, could not have been compared. This shows that human beings are living in two spheres simultaneously, the sphere of the infinite and that of the finite.

Another conclusion follows. If we are to be as sure of our experience of God as we are of the experience of the finite world, our consciousness has to be directed away from the finite world, which means that we should rise above our minds. This conclusion may appear very strange to the European philosopher for whom self and mind are only two names for one and the same thing. But to the Indian philosopher it is quite familiar. Even in European philosophy we find the distinction made between the higher and the lower, the noumenal and the empirical, the finite and the infinite self or mind. We may say that the mind of Indian philosophy corresponds roughly to the lower, the empirical or the finite self of European philosophy. But let it be noted that this correspondence is only very rough, for the word *manas*, which is translated as "mind", excludes the ego or *ahamkara* in almost all Indian systems and is different also from *buddhi* or the determining faculty. There are other differences into which we need not enter now. The word *antahkarana* comes perhaps closer in meaning to the English word "mind". But these differences of detail do not affect our main contention. The point is that the self should be treated as above mind and as in some way different from it. It is the self that must have been in contact with God, whatever be the nature of that contact. Further, the same self must somehow be present in the mind; otherwise, as we have said, the experience of the imperfect could not have been compared with that of the perfect. And in spite of feeling the difference between the two, we wonder whether we are conscious of God, because we are not able to bring this consciousness down to the level of our consciousness of the finite.

P. T. RAJU

# ER PLANS A LIFE

[**William H. Roberts,** a citizen of the United States, was born in Rangoon. He is chiefly a professor and an author, but his interests are varied and he has also had experience in the business field and served as a lieutenant in 1917-1919. His writings exemplify this variety of interests and comprise such widely different subjects as a study of Mahatma Gandhi, the five thousand temples of Pagahn and the fallacy of the uni-polar explanation.—ED.]

"The name on the card is only one of my names", my visitor said, when he had seated himself in my study. "I have had more names than it would be easy to count."

"The name that would mean most to you", he continued, "is Er."

"Er?" I inquired. "I'm sorry, but that *doesn't* mean anything to me."

"You have read about me."

"I can't remember doing so."

"I know you have. I know you have read Plato. He wrote about me—in the last book of his *Republic*."

Of course I remembered *that* Er. More than two thousand years ago Socrates held a group of young Athenians spellbound, while he recited the "myth" of Er the Pamphyllian.

Er died, Socrates told them, and went to the land of the departed. There he saw many wonderful sights. Most wonderful of all was the occasion on which those of the spirits who had fulfilled their appointed times were summoned to return to earth and to life.

They were assembled on a great plain. Before them all possible kinds of lives were laid out on display. God bade them choose the lives they wanted. Each spirit chose according to the wisdom or the folly experience had taught him.

"I see you remember", Er said quietly.

"Ah, yes. I didn't connect you with Plato right away. Now, please excuse me for being blunt, but what is the idea?"

"I'm not joking", Er assured me. "I never was more serious in my life—I ought to say, my many lives."

"And I'm not crazy, either", he added. "Before you telephone for the police, let me tell you that I can summon a score of witnesses who have known me well for many years. They will be glad to testify to my sobriety, sanity and moral character. If you begin to talk to them about Er the Pamphyllian, it will be *your* sanity they will question."

So it was that Er came to my home and commissioned me to write the story of a more recent experience in the realm of those who have lived and are about to live again. I asked him why he had picked me for the task, but he could give no answer. It was an urge, he said, like that which drove the Ancient Mariner. As for the story, he said that it would carry conviction to those for whom it was meant. To others it would seem only the idlest of idle fantasies.

Er's more recent experience was very like the one of which Socrates had told the young Athenians, yet very different. Er has lived many lives since that far-off time. He has suffered much and has thought deeply upon the meanings of pain and beauty and joy and sadness. Moreover, centuries after Socrates and Plato were dead, Jesus of Nazareth had visited the earth. From the Cross

on Calvary Er has seen great rays of glory lighting up many mysteries of life and death, of beauty and love.

When God on this most recent occasion bade Er choose a life, Er made bold to answer ; " I do not see any here that is to my liking. Will it be presumption, if I ask permission to plan a life as I would like it ?"

God smiled, a little sadly Er thought. " Let me see how you would do it ", He said. " I am not sure you would make as good a job of it as any of these on display. There are all sorts of limitations of which you may not be aware. Even I cannot have everything just as I would like it."

" It seems to me ", Er said very humbly and reverently, " that all my worst sufferings have been due to my own mistakes. So I am not very concerned with the circumstances in which I am to live or the things that may happen to me. I only want to be able to handle each situation in the right way as it arises."

" That's a fair beginning ", God said, " but not exactly startling in its originality. I've been able to help men see that truth ever since I could induce them to think upon such matters at all. The Stoics, you remember, were particularly eloquent on that theme."

" Yes. I know. But I've been thinking as deeply as I have been able about those mistakes. I've been trying to find some common element or factor in them. I think I have it. I think they all occurred when I lost sight of—You. When I turned away from Beauty, all my values became confused, and I made the stupidest choices any one could imagine. When I doubted Love, fear drove me frantic. When I lost hold on Power, I was feeble and ineffective until I loathed my very self."

" So—pardon the expression, it is so very concise—what ? "

" I think that if I must live again on earth, I want to live with an undimmed and unflickering certainty of God. I want to scale all values in terms of beauty, the beauty that is and the beauty that might be. I want to be sure of love. I want to use power to create beauty, for the sake of love. If I can be sure that wisdom and joy in beauty and love are what men really want and all they need, if I can be sure of You—as I am now—I think I should never be afraid or sad or disgusted with myself."

God was silent for a long time. Er began to fear that he had offended.

" If that is selfish, forgive me ", Er pleaded. " It seems to me to be just the opposite. Wouldn't that be just the kind of life that would be richest in blessing to other lives ? Wouldn't Your glory shine through me to make life radiant all around ? You know what I mean so much better than I do myself, so You will not think it just crazy presumption—God, wouldn't that be Your opportunity ? "

Still God was silent.

Er wondered and trembled a little.

At last God spoke. " You know not what you ask. Are you able to drink of the cup that I must drink ? "

" I recognize the quotation ", Er replied. " The mother of James and John asked Jesus that her two sons might sit one on his right hand and the other on his left when he came into his kingdom. But how does that apply to me ? I'm not asking for place or honour. I'm only asking for sight—just to see You everywhere."

"That is something very much more terrible and perilous."

"The vision of Beauty terrible and perilous?"

"Yes. Do you think a man could endure it?"

"I have never thought of Beauty and Love as terrible. Power, yes, sometimes. But not the other two."

"I told Moses that no man could look upon my face and live."

"Was that the meaning? I thought it was only a bit of Hebrew folk-lore."

"I let Nietzsche catch a few glimpses of the splendour life might hold. He couldn't stand it. It drove him mad."

"John on Patmos", God continued, "wrote that when my glory should be revealed, men would call upon the mountains to fall upon them to hide them from its splendour."

"I thought that was to hide them from Your wrath."

"Wrath is a trait of weakness, not of Omnipotence. What men have called my wrath is only the unendurable brilliance of my glory."

Er pondered God's words, while God waited patiently. "I have known a beauty so beautiful", Er spoke very slowly, "that all my joy in it was swallowed up in pain. And that pain was something I wanted more than any joy. That helps me to understand—just a little—what You have been saying. A greater beauty might have destroyed me. As I see it now, though, I would be glad to burn for one brief moment in such agony, though it might shrivel me to nothingness."

"It would. And that is just what I can't permit. I told you at the beginning that there were limitations you probably did not suspect. That is one of them. Only I myself can endure the full splendour of my glory. To live with such a vision as you have asked, you would have to be God."

"Is this, then, too much to ask, that I may have so much of the vision as a human being can endure?"

"How much do you think you could endure?"

"You know—better than I."

"Do you remember what Plato wrote about me in the *Timaeus*? He wrote that I made as good a world as I could out of the materials I had at hand."

"I remember. But Christian thought always maintained that You created the materials themselves."

"In any case there are resistances of which I have to take account, limitations to which I have to submit, if I am to accomplish any of my purposes."

"Tagore said something like that—

'Our Maker Himself hath taken upon Him the bonds of creation.'"

"Exactly. Now one of the bonds of creation is this—that as light spreads from its source it must not only grow less intense but must encounter opaque bodies that break it into rays with dark spaces between. Here and now you are looking at Truth and Beauty in light evenly diffused. Earth, to which you must go down, is a realm of 'broken lights' and black shadows."

"Dropping the figure of speech, just what does that mean?"

"Moments of glorious insight and high resolves. Hours of doubt, confusion, weakness, and dismay. For most men the world is an affair of darker or lighter, all fairly tolerable, grays. For you it must be all brilliant lights and black shadows."

Er was silent now for a long time. At length—"Tell me about the shadows. Are they so very terrible?"

"The worst of them is that your fellow men will never understand you

or the truth you are trying to tell them. They will refute you and ridicule you. They will cast you out of their societies —even out of their churches. They will deprive you of all the ordinary means of livelihood. They will heap indignities upon you."

"But surely some will understand."

"A very few—and very imperfectly."

"At least those who are closest to me."

"They will doubt."

Again Er was silent.

"That will be much less than others have endured", he said at length. "If others have stood it, why cannot I? So long as *I* see clearly, nothing else matters. Just grant me the sure vision, love that asks nothing for itself. Those can change all indignities into honour."

"You have not counted all the cost yet", God checked him. "If you will be content with just an occasional glimpse of Truth and Beauty, if you will not antagonize men too violently, you will find life tolerable enough. But I thought you wanted to be wholly absorbed in the vision."

"I do. I do."

"Then you must be prepared for worse yet. Men will believe you a criminal—a traitor. They will hate you. They will wreak their vengeance upon you."

"Death?"

"Worse."

"Torture?"

"The worst that hate can devise."

Er shivered. But his sufferings had taught him wisdom. "The vision is enough", he said, "the suffering will be but for a time. It will soon be over."

"No. It will *not* soon be over."

Er told me that he looked the question he could not bring his lips to frame.

"Men are cleverer now than they were in the olden times. You have heard of the 'concentration camps'?"

Er nodded.

"Weeks and even months of torture, always stopping just short of the severity that would give release. Utter loneliness. Not even the opportunity to bear a moving and convincing testimony before a crowd. At the end only a brief note to your family that you died a traitor."

God paused. Er could not answer. God looked at him with gentle pity.

"Shall we call it off?" God asked.

Er shook himself free from the numbing horror that was fastening itself upon him.

"No!" he cried, "No! I'll face it—the shame and the pain. Just grant me the *strength* to do it. I see it clearly enough now. Only promise me that I shall know it just as surely then, that I won't weaken. Just let me know now that I won't doubt and won't weaken then."

"Little Er, one very much greater than you cried out at such a time, 'My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?'"

"But grant me at least to *know*. That can transmute all suffering into triumph. I shall see the world moving from wars toward lasting peace because of what I am enduring. I shall see young children growing up straighter, more beautiful and unafraid. I shall see young lovers, joyous homes, old age touched with beauty and gladness. I shall never lose sight of all that. And I shall know that I am winning it for them. If I can just be sure of that, I can stand anything. It seems such a little thing to ask—just to know."

"Did he?"

Er heard his own voice, as though it were the voice of another, asking, "Is

that what it would cost to save the world?"

God made no answer.

Er—or rather Er's voice—changed the question. "Is that what it *cost* to save the world?"

He saw his answer in God's face.

When Er could speak again it was to ask a different question. "You said that You Yourself could not have everything as You wished it?"

"Is not sin the proof of it?"

"Then, if You encounter resistances and experience limitations, do You suffer, too?"

"Is it not written that I gave my Son?"

"Why must there be resistances and limitations even for God?"

"That is something I cannot explain —not even to myself."

God noted the wonder in Er's face.

"To explain it, I would have to refer to something higher than myself. I can only repeat the old paradoxes that in order to be infinite, Infinity must impose limitations upon itself, that in my being I harmonize the clash and strain of opposites and realize myself through such tensions."

"But why did You do it? Why all the burden of creation—'the bonds of creation'? Didn't You foresee it all?"

"Of course I foresaw it. Past, present and future to me are an everlasting Now. Time is only 'the moving image of eternity'. Einstein should help you to understand that great phrase of Plato's."

"Then why? Why not everlasting peace and rest?"

"Because that would be blank nothingness. I am life and must bring forth life. Why is it written that I gave my Son?"

"'God so loved the world.'"

"I loved. That means I discerned a beauty that might be—that shall yet be."

That is all Er can remember. He does not recall on what grounds he chose the life he is now living, or indeed whether he chose it himself or not. He thinks he gave up the attempt to plan a life for himself, or even to choose one, and asked God to pick one out for him. But what actually happened, he cannot say.

WILLIAM H. ROBERTS

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Most of us know the difficulty of facing bravely an entirely new situation which carries us into unknown paths. If, at such a moment, someone whom we love and trust comes near to us with a winning gift of confidence, and says, "Have no fear, for I will go with you every step of the way", then at once the dead-weight of anxiety is lifted, and in his company we go on our way rejoicing. Even so Christ's presence will go with us on our own untried life's journey, and He will give us rest.

—C. F. ANDREWS

# FREEDOM THROUGH SERVICE

[This is the fifth in the series of studies on the "Gita" by Professor D. S. Sarma, the first of which appeared in our January number.—ED.]

We are now in a position to understand the *Gita* doctrine of *Svadharma*. To interpret this doctrine merely in terms of caste duties and to say that every man is bound to follow the calling of the group into which he is born, irrespective of his own innate capacities and tendencies, is only to misunderstand the meaning of the Teacher. We have already seen that the whole aim of Krishna is to combat the view of Arjuna about Jati-dharma and Kula-dharma and to free the concept of Dharma from all external rules so as to make it conterminous with spiritual life. But if we take his teaching about Svadharma to mean only insistence on caste duties we are coming back to the same old Jati-dharma and Kula-dharma, of which Arjuna spoke at the outset. Krishna's insight goes much deeper than that. It penetrates all accidents of birth and circumstance to the core of man's own nature. His doctrine of Svadharma is based on the rock of *Svabhava*. For he says :—

"Better is one's own duty, though imperfectly done, than the duty of another well done. He who does the duty imposed on him by his own nature incurs no sin. One ought not to give up the work which is suited to one's own nature, O Arjuna, though it has its imperfections ; for every enterprise is beset with imperfections, as fire with smoke." (XVIII. 47-48)

It is true that Krishna appeals to Arjuna as a Kshatriya whose duty is to fight. He says :—

"Further, if thou shouldst regard thine own duty, thou shouldst not falter, for to a Kshatriya there is no higher good than a righteous war." (II. 31)

But then he is thinking of an ideal society in which the division of classes is based on character and profession. For in a famous verse he says, "The four castes were created by me according to the division of character and function." (IV. 13) And subsequently, to illustrate his theme, he says, "Heroism, vigour, firmness, resourcefulness, dauntlessness in battle, generosity and majesty—these are the duties of a Kshatriya, springing from his own nature." (XVIII. 43)

It is to these qualities in Arjuna that Krishna is appealing when he asks him to follow his Svadharma and fight. If the Teacher had based his doctrine only on caste duties and not on duties "imposed by one's own nature" it would have had no permanent validity. As it is, his teaching is valid for all time and for all types of society. According to him every man should cultivate his own natural gifts, should be true to himself before he thinks of serving society or God. It is only then that he will be an efficient member of the community or an efficient servant of the Divine Master. It is only then that his actions will have not only efficiency but also ease, spontaneity and beauty. For beauty is nothing but the inimitable grace which all creatures acquire when they are true to the law of their own being. A rose is beautiful when it approaches the ideal pattern of a rose and not that of any other flower. A horse is beautiful when it approaches the ideal horse and not the

ideal elephant. The world is rich in individual forms. Krishna says :—

"Behold my forms, O Arjuna, by hundreds and thousands—manifold and divine and of varied hues and shapes." (XI. 5)

And when any individual form acquires efficiency or strength or grace it reveals and glorifies the work of God. As Krishna says, "Whatever being there is, endowed with grandeur, beauty or strength, know that it has sprung only from a spark of my splendour." (X. 41) And the way to acquire these qualities is to be true to one's own self, to perfect one's own aptitudes, to improve one's own gifts, to progress along the lines laid down by Nature—in a word, to act according to one's Svadharma. Thus the *Bhagavad-Gita* is quite in accord with the most advanced educational theories of to-day, in holding that individuality is sacred and inviolable and that all an educator has to do is to make the child discover his Svadharma and to allow him free play to develop along his own lines.

But the *Gita* does not stop there. All that we have been saying so far about Nature, individuality and Svadharma represents less than half of its teaching—and that the lower half. If this were all, Krishna would be only a good naturalistic philosopher, not a great World Teacher. Nature is no doubt our starting-point, but God is our goal. We should not forget that if Nature is our mother, God is our father. All our varied individualities find their fulfilment at last only in Him. Hence all our activities should have only one ultimate aim, namely, our spiritual progress. We generally crave more for the immediate consequences of our actions than for their inherent rightness. We calculate their effects on our fortunes and not on our character. It often happens that that action which brings us the greatest material gain involves the greatest spiritual loss. In fact, what is sin but a sacrifice of our higher self to the desires and passions of our lower self? So the first thing that we have to do, if we want to lead a religious life, is to shift the aim of all our activities from the external world of men into the internal world of spirit. By doing so we find that we give a unity to our actions which they did not before possess. Also we find that there is no such thing as defeat in spiritual life. For when we think a kind thought, say a good word or do a righteous deed, we may succeed or fail in the world but we automatically raise ourselves in the kingdom of the spirit. Hence the *Gita* says at the very outset of its teaching :—

"In this no effort is ever lost, and no harm is ever done. Even a little of this law saves a man from great fear. In this the resolute mind has a single aim, O Arjuna ; but the thoughts of the irresolute are manifold and endless." (II. 40-41)

When we turn away from the material consequences of our actions to their spiritual values we discover a new world, as it were, and find ourselves co-operating with the spirit of God energizing the universe. Every effort in this direction adds to our strength and we grow indifferent to gain or loss, victory or defeat, pleasure or pain which our actions may bring us. The more we care for virtue, appreciate beauty or pursue truth for their own sake the nearer do we feel to God and the better fitted to be His instruments. Even our ordinary duties in life may be converted into opportunities for serving God and for furthering His purpose. We have to lose ourselves,

no doubt, in the beginning. We have to give up the material fruits of our actions. But we gain ourselves in the end. We discover our true selves.

This is real sacrifice—the sacrifice of the lower self to the higher self. This is real worship—the worship of spiritual values like Truth and Beauty. And it is only when a man discharges his duties in a spirit of worship and of sacrifice that he gains true freedom. For God's service is freedom itself. This, in modern terms, is Krishna's teaching, which is sometimes called the doctrine of *Nishkamakarma* or disinterested work. This term *Nishkamakarma* is not a very satisfactory one, for it indicates only the negative side of the teaching, namely, the eradication of self-centred desire as a motive for action. But we are taught not only to eradicate kama or desire but also to substitute in its place yoga or fellowship with God. Love of God is to take the place of attachment to the world. So the term *karmayoga,* which brings out the positive side of the teaching, is a much better one.

But by whatever name we call it, the doctrine is epoch-making in the history of Hindu religious thought. Its importance lies, first, in that it reconciles two ancient and opposite schools of thought —those who preached salvation through works and those who preached salvation through renunciation of works; secondly, in that it gives a new meaning and importance to life on earth ; thirdly, in that it brings heaven within the reach of all ; and, fourthly and above all, in that it offers a solvent to the Law of Karma.

The great objection to a life of action, from the standpoint of some teachers of religion, was that it bound a man to the wheel of Samsara or the round of births and deaths. For the good or the evil fruits of actions in one life have to be reaped in the next and so on in endless succession. Therefore the best way of releasing oneself from this *Karma-bandha* or bond of action is, according to these teachers, to practise *karma-sannyasa* or renunciation of action. The way to obtain *Moksha* is to turn away from all activities of life and to attain to a state of " actionlessness ". One can imagine what will happen to a society if all its members begin to put this philosophy into practice. A life of renunciation and of contemplation is not for all. It is only for a few choice souls. For the large majority of men, a life of action is the best and the most natural. And action should not be dreaded as something that forges bonds for us in this life or the next. It is not every kind of action that binds. There are also actions that release. Krishna points out that actions done through attachment to the world bind the soul, but that actions done in a spirit of sacrifice and of service to God will not bind but release.

" This world is fettered by work, unless it is done as a sacrifice. Therefore, O Arjuna, give up thy attachments and do thy work as a sacrifice." (III. 9)

Thus Krishna's great discovery is that the alternative to karma-bandha is not karma-sannyasa but karma-yoga. His new doctrine is preached throughout the *Gita* in many eloquent passages from which a few selections may be given here :—

" Work alone art thou entitled to, and not to its fruit. So never work for fruit, nor yet desist from work. Work with an even mind, O Arjuna, having given up all attachment. Be of even mind in success and failure. Evenness of mind is called Yoga." (II. 47-48)

" As ignorant men act from attachment to their work, O Arjuna, so too should

an enlightened man act, but without any attachment, so that he may maintain the order of the world. Let no enlightened man unsettle the minds of the ignorant who are attached to their work. Himself doing all works with faith he should make others do so as well." (III. 25-26)

"He whose undertakings are all free from desire and self-will and whose works are burnt up by the fire of knowledge—him the wise call a sage. Giving up attachment to the fruit of works, always satisfied, and depending on none, he is ever engaged in work—and yet he does no work at all." (IV. 19-20)

"He who works without attachments, resigning his actions to God, is untouched by sin as a lotus leaf by water. With the body, with the mind, with the understanding and with the senses alone, men of selfless actions do their work without attachment, for the purification of their souls. A selfless man who has renounced the fruit of his actions attains to a disciplined peace of mind. But the man who is not selfless is impelled by desire and is attached to the fruit and is therefore bound." (V. 10-12)

"Whatsoever thou doest, whatsoever thou eatest, whatsoever thou offerest, whatsoever thou givest away and whatsoever of austerities thou dost practise—do that as an offering to me. Thus shalt thou be free from the bonds of works which bear good or evil fruits. With thy mind firmly set on the way of renunciation thou shalt become free and come to me." (IX. 27-28)

"Some sages declare that all works should be abandoned as evil. Others say that works of sacrifice, gifts and penance should not be given up. Hear now from me, O Arjuna, the truth about resignation, for resignation is declared to be of three kinds, O best of men. Works of sacrifice, gifts and penance should not be given up, but should be performed. For sacrifice, gifts and penance purify the wise. Even these works should, however, be done with surrender of attachment and of fruits. This, O Arjuna, is my decided and final view." (XVIII. 3-6)

D. S. SARMA

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# ON MODERATION

Robert Lynd, in his "Plea for the Moderate Man" in *John O'London's Weekly* for 26th January, was nodding when he wrote :—

"Of the golden virtue of moderation, I imagine, the first great teacher was Aristotle."

The slip brings out once again how slight is the acquaintance of even highly educated and otherwise well-informed man of the West with the world, as distinguished from merely European cultural heritage. Aristotle lived in the fourth century B.C. and the Buddha, with his teaching of the Middle Way, in the fifth and sixth centuries before the Christian era; and long before the Buddha Krishna had laid down the doctrine of moderation in the *Bhagavad-Gita* (VI, 16-17).

It is not necessary to claim priority or even originality for Aristotle to appreciate his definition of virtue as "a mean between two vices, one of excess and the other of deficiency". Thus liberality he defines as the golden mean between prodigality and meanness; confidence as that between rashness and fear; gentleness as the mean between irascibility and spiritlessness.

It would not be difficult to account for the Indian echoes in Aristotle's writings. Aristotle gathered not a few of his ideas from the Pythagorean philosophy, which was that of his teacher Plato and was the faithful reflection of the Buddhistic tenets as well as containing much which Pythagoras had learned from the Brahmans of India.

# THE FUTURE MEETS THE PAST

[Douglas McLellan is one of our youngest contributors. His sole reasons for living, he tells us, are his spiritual interests—the perpetual search for Truth and the study of Yoga.—ED.]

The trend of modern thought seems to be moving towards some form of nihilism. The warfare between science and religion is intense. Science appears to be winning—cold, hard science with its substitution of inexorable mechanical law for God, of mutual profit for love and brotherhood.

The leaders of popular thought are the interpreters of science. Science means rationalism. Rationalism usually means atheism. Before the era of mechanical philosophy the intellectual vanguard sought its inspiration in religious philosophy. To-day the eternal fount is science. To-day men make science their philosophy and the writings of Wells, Huxley and Sullivan their Bible.

Modern man occupies a hitherto unparalleled position. He has before him indisputable scientific proofs—never dreamt of by his ancestors—which so often lead him to draw the empty conclusion that blind, unswerving Law is omnipresent, that force and forces are omnipotent. He does not willingly reject the deeply ingrained ideas of the God of Love, of heartfelt—as opposed to rational—morality and ethics. In so far as he substitutes law for God he is a mild atheist. His emotions may be with God, but his intellect is with science.

As a young man I am intimately acquainted with the attitude of thinking youth—from late teens to early twenties—to this problem. What do young men and women equipped with University or higher education think? I have found that in most cases where there is a fixed opinion they bluntly and precociously aver that they are downright atheists and proud of it.

I do not blame them. The facts of science are so much more real than the theorising of philosophy or the dogma of religion. On the same basis I do not blame the ordinary intelligent man who rationally excludes things he may feel are good and fine. There are many who would agree with me, but they would agree regretfully. On the contrary, I think this spirit should be cultivated—not for its own sake, but for what it must become. Empty agnosticism is no more satisfying than irrational faith. The former seems to many the true attitude, the latter the desirable one. As surely as the sun will rise to-morrow a satisfactory medium will be found—one which will appeal to the head as well as to the heart.

It will be found, I say, because it has been found. It was written for future generations in an old book many centuries ago, although the teachings of that venerable volume have been forgotten. The name of the book is *Bhagavadgita-Upanishadah*, or *The Secret Doctrines Delivered by the Exalted One.* Nobody knows who wrote it. It would make no difference if any one did. In the *Gita*—famous as a sacred book in the East but little known as yet in the West—no dogma is set, no God, no morality, no ethics are postulated.

It goes even further than science in

its negation, for it denies even the ultimate value of thought and of action.

But there is an important difference between the genius of the *Gita* and the spirit of science. Whilst the latter is the expression of contact with death, the former is the effulgence of life. Physical matter is the stuff of science, and it is without life. Being—unconditional, impersonal being—is the stuff of the *Gita*.

The sole thesis upon which the Teaching is based is the existence of Being. Science affirms this. To doubt Being would be to doubt one's own existence. By Being, however, Absolute Being is implied. In childish language this means that there exists the ultimate state of I AM—unconditional, intransitive Being since all the objects of the verb "AM" may be eliminated. Proof that they can be eliminated lies in the fact that at the moments of birth and death thought dwindles down to I AM. What am I? I AM THAT I AM—I am that which IS—Being. There is nothing else for me to be. All things large and small are reducible to Being by eliminating their particular conditions of being. All things which are are by virtue of their "I-ness" or Being. I AM THAT I AM or, more simply, I AM is an absolute expression. In human language it is limited by appearing personal, but the "I" expresses that which IS and the "AM" describes its action or state.

All things have the one basis—Being. So fundamental and irrefutable is this truth that it is almost capable of physical proof. Science has already penetrated through the most fundamental of man's conceptions—the solidity, indeed the reality, of matter. Matter is no longer taken as a collective name for various permanent solid substances. Instead, all matter, regardless of its external form, is considered as a collection of atoms. An atom is a positive and negative charge of electricity. Electricity is force. Force is the action, or manifestation, of motive power. And so we penetrate into the nature of matter, simplifying each quality until we eventually reach the absolute basis, which IS THAT WHICH IT IS. All things can be reduced, or eliminated, to One; hence all things ultimately are One.

Our position is now clear. We have an ultimate state, substance, thought. It is absolute and unique. Since it is the only thing enjoying unconditional, unmodified, unrestricted existence we must consider it the greatest thing. All that is conditional is, by this standard, inferior to Absolute Being.

We may call this existence God if we wish to have something to worship, something to look up to. In this conception no anthropomorphic deity can be admitted, although it is possible to postulate minor gods, *i.e.*, beings, cosmic artificers, who are less conditional than man, and who might reasonably take an interest in man.

Absolute Being must be our standard of perfection and imperfection, of good, bad, right, wrong, true, untrue, since there is nothing beyond itself on which we can determine these things.

How, then, do we apply such a standard to human interests? The *Gita* contains the answer. Since Absolute Being is the ultimate, hence the only Reality, it sets the standard of Perfection. Conditional things derive their degree of perfection or imperfection from their relation to Absolute Being. Nevertheless, although man may be imperfect, he has a perfect basis, or, in the unreal language of theorematic philosophy, although man is a conditional being he

could not be conditional unless he possessed that absolute quality which is capable of being qualified by conditions.

The *Gita* makes this position, with all its far-reaching consequences, crystal-clear by postulating in man two selves—a personal and an impersonal, a lower and a higher, a conditional and an absolute.

The personal self is the one best known to you. It is the everyday self, subject to the thoughts and emotions of day-to-day living. The Higher Self you have probably not contacted. To do so you must eliminate all conditions—you must temporarily kill your ratiocinative mind, and, in the absence of the personal-conditional, the impersonal-absolute will be permitted to manifest. Such a state is, of course, not easy to attain and requires much practice. Certain Yoga exercises are directed towards this end—union with the Universal Spirit, the God in Man. Patanjali taught it in his writings, and if his work may legitimately be called the Yogi's text-book, the *Gita* may be described as the Yogi's Bible. For the thoughts which have been expressed here are mine only in form—the original ideas are to be found in the true Yoga philosophy.

The true perspective is obtained when we are aware of the existence of the Absolute Self and attain some degree of consciousness therein. When we understand that what we are really seeking is freedom from conditions—which are limitations—conditional relative things no longer hold such a great attraction for us. We voluntarily renounce them.

Renunciation is a very fundamental concept in many religious systems, and it takes many forms. Sometimes certain objects—often foods—are renounced, often habits. But this is not true renunciation.

Should we, then, retire into the wilderness and give ourselves up to prayer and meditation?

Krishna, as Lord of the Universe, supplies the answer: "The worlds would fall into ruin if I did not perform action ...but as the ignorant act from attachment to action so should the wise act without attachment, desiring the welfare of the world."

In this statement we have the key to right conduct. No changes in the customary method of living are necessary. It is not objects or habits or even ways of living that are to be renounced. We are to "renounce the fruits of action". We must extinguish desire, yet live as one who lives for desire alone—the ultimate, most elevated desire of raising the Personal Self until it becomes one with Absolute Being or the God within. For truly we are all "Gods in the becoming".

We have said that the Teaching is philosophically satisfactory. But is it humanly satisfactory? Is the position of its application synonymous with that of the schoolboy who evades his castor oil although he knows it is good for him? For some it may conceivably be too exalted, but for the average intelligent individual this should not be so. It does not prevent your continuing to be a human being. Rather than making you inhuman it makes you superhuman. Your day-to-day life is not changed externally. Your interests are pitched on a higher plane, but you will still retain sufficient interest in worldly affairs to make full use of them. The point is that you begin to use them, instead of permitting them to master you. You will sweep away limitations. You will live impersonally. If it is true that you will not enjoy the pleasures of life

any more intensely than in the past, it is equally true that you will regard your sorrows less bitterly. Joy and sorrow will not affect the Real You in which your real life is now lived—it is aloof from conditional things. IT IS.

There is one form of activity, however, to which we must devote our full attention, and which for most people is most necessary in some form or another. That is Love. Love is not a limitation. It is the only true emotion and is essentially expansive. The man without it is limited. He is selfish. "Thou wilt see all beings without exception in the Self, and thus in Me." We are all part of the same expression. We are brothers, bound by a fraternity deeper than mere flesh and blood. We are Brothers of the Spirit.

Live the Truth, then, and you will become the Truth. TRUTH IS, and nothing more can be said about it because it is beyond mind. To know that IT IS is completely satisfying. You express and become Truth Personified when you make impersonality and love the dominant factors in your life.

DOUGLAS MCLELLAN

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# PERSPECTIVISM

A common toy, the stereoscope, has a suggestive symbolism. Bringing together two pictures of the same scene, taken from different angles, it blends them into one image surpassing in accuracy and in depth both of the separate points of view. If only a similar aid to mental vision were as readily available to all, without the labour of acquiring a rounded philosophy of life—a mental stereoscope that would enable men and nations to see things as they are, not only as they look from where each man or nation stands!

The whole view—that which Mr. Gabriel Wells, in a recent address at Yale University in the U. S. A. called "Perspectivism"—that is what the world needs. Mr. Wells urged, as the only sane course of the warring nations, getting together as soon as possible to discuss the terms of peace while a negotiated peace, "based on mutual interests and advantages", can still be made. Shaky as are such supports for an enduring peace, which can rest safely only on justice and the common good, a dictated peace would be only an armistice and a negotiated peace is obviously preferable. And even if the Peace Conference should miscarry, Mr. Wells points out, it would have clarified the war aims, which, we may add, stand in great need of clearer definition.

> Willingness to sit in with an antagonist at a public assembly is a sign, not of weakness, but of strength.

Free and frank discussion holds no terrors for the man sure of his ground. As Viscount Cranborne points out in "Why Britain Fights" in *Foreign Affairs* for January, an unbending attitude of non-conciliation is as repugnant to a democrat as it is congenial to a dictator.

> Faced with a dispute between his country and another, a democratic statesman feels a national instinct to compromise, to try and find some middle line between the two points of view, to narrow the gulf until it becomes bridgeable. He knows that the result will probably not be entirely satisfactory to either party. But a conflict will have been avoided, and that fact, to his mind, will far outweigh the advantages which might conceivably have been obtained by a more rigid attitude.

If and when the idea of a Peace Conference is acceptable to the enemy, the democracies will surely not hold back.

# NEW BOOKS AND OLD

## WHITHER EVOLUTION*

Mr. Gerald Heard is a bold idealist. In this book he gives his diagnosis of humanity's ills, and suggests a remedy. His thesis is that man has reached a stage of physical development and perfection which makes his further physical evolution unlikely. But in another sense, his evolution is not over. There is in him a great reservoir of vital energy which could be used for evolutionary purposes. Compared to him, all animals are living fossils. Man alone can still evolve. But this evolution can only be psychical. Mr. Heard rejects the Freudian position that "man will never become a more advanced species than he now is". Only, in his view, the new species will be distinguished not by any unusual physical mutations, but by an enlargement of consciousness.

All the ills from which man suffers are due to his fissured psyche. Man has overdeveloped his analytical intelligence. He has created a body of scientific knowledge "which to-day gives him infinite means and no ends, unlimited powers and no sanctions". The result is that his psychology or mental growth has not kept pace with his physics. He is sundered from his subconscious, and he is sundered from the larger reality. What is wanted is a reintegration of himself. Unless this is achieved, civilization as we know it must come to an end. We need a new sanction for morality. It can only be derived from right knowledge or a wider consciousness. Unless we evolve in this direction, "the only choice is slow degeneracy through sex addiction or a convulsive end through homicidal mania."

Mr. Heard thinks that an anthropomorphic religion gives no real sanction for morality. We depend too much upon an outside power to solve our problems. We think that our business is done when we have petitioned God. We must learn to depend upon ourselves. This we can do only when we are able to enlarge the aperture of our consciousness and to see a new reality. Anthropomorphic religion is not the highest stage in the evolutionary process. It does not raise us above animality. We continue to see the same animal's world, and we continue to be governed by the animal's passions of greed and fear. The one thing that can raise us above the animal is an enlarged consciousness which will reveal our unity with all things. The self-conscious ego is a limitation, a husk and a shell in which we find ourselves imprisoned. We must come out of it into the open, into the light, and realise our true nature. This we can do only through a new psychological technique. Meditation and contemplation must take the place of petitionary prayer.

Mr. Heard is not satisfied with indicating the general line of evolution. He goes further. He prescribes a way of life and a way of social organisation which would arrest self-destructive social tendencies. According to him, man is facing the greatest crisis in his history. His power of mutual destruction compares only with his greed and his fear. The dictators are exploiting the passion of fear to lead people away to a homicidal war. The democracies work upon his passion of greed. They have nothing to offer except certain physical comforts and a *status quo* which would perpetuate injustices. What is wanted in these circumstances is a new psychiatry, which would annul both greed and fear, and replace these by a mind which derived its highest joy not in possessing the goods of this world, but in feeling its unity with all things.

* *Pain, Sex and Time.* By GERALD HEARD. (Cassell and Co., Ltd., London. 10*s.* 6*d.*)

"Only by aiming at an order which transcends the economic and the material can we achieve fine physical conditions."

There must be a Copernican revolution in psychology. This alone can cure our economic and political malaise.

Mr. Heard recommends the organisation of self-supporting centres where psychological training can be carried out under the guidance of experts and in an experimental and a truly scientific way. But the organisation of these centres will not immediately affect the cataclysmic clash of interests which might destroy Western civilisation. For this purpose a new factor is necessary. Mr. Heard calls the pioneer of this evolutionary movement the "neo-Brahmin". The neo-Brahmin is a person who has completely discarded his ego, a person who has seen the light. He has no possessions and he is completely free from greed and fear. He disarms suspicion and opposition by his utter non-violence. He is not afraid to tell the truth against all dictators and against all organised authority. He works up a revolution in the minds of men, and promulgates a new social order in which mutual suspicion and hatred give place to mutual service based upon a higher enlightenment. He shows a new way of living and a new purpose in life. It is only a person who has conquered himself that can conquer the world. He alone can save man from self-destruction.

We agree whole-heartedly with the author that only a true knowledge of their own nature will change men's hearts and serve as a cure for all individual and social ills. It is because man does not know a higher reality and is confined to the world of the animal that he is a slave to passions and that he creates, in association with other like individuals, "a society which is first competitive and then anarchic". The author seems to support the Vedantic view that it is *avidya* or ignorance of our true Self that is the root cause of all our troubles. But there is an important difference. Mr. Heard has left the character of the higher knowledge undefined. He talks of a larger unifying consciousness, a super-sensible intuition, a vision of a reality other than the animal's. Often, however, he does not clearly distinguish the evolution of new super-sensible faculties or what he calls the enlargement of the aperture of consciousness from that true vision which will enable man to transcend his little ego. It is important, therefore, to note that the evolution of higher faculties like clairvoyance, telepathy, soothsaying etc., has nothing to do with that knowledge which will change men's hearts and make them pioneers of a new spiritual order. Such psychical evolution could still be part of a man's apparatus for exploitation of his fellow beings.

True knowledge of reality which will satisfy the higher spiritual needs of man is something radically different. According to Vedanta, it is the perception of the identity of the Self with the ultimate ground of the world or *Brahman*. "The Knower of *Brahman* becomes *Brahman*." A person who realises this unity may still be in the body; but he will not feel the body as a limitation. He will be what is called a true "jivanmukta", a person released from every form of bondage here and now. He may continue to sense the same world and to live like other men in all outward respects, but he will not be affected like other men. He has ceased to be interested in the world and in what happens to the bodies and the minds of men. He has seen a vision of unity which cancels all differences as ultimately unreal.

Mr. Heard does not appear to have in view this kind of knowledge, a knowledge which reduces to an illusion all appearance of duality and even all appearance of a world. But whatever his view of the ultimate vision of reality, the nature of it must be more definitely indicated. Otherwise our effort will go to waste. A method of experimentation may be good in science. It is not good for directing our spiritual effort. The man who has already reached the goal alone can instruct. There must be no

vacillation and no aimlessness. The task is too difficult to be carried through under those conditions. The way in which Mr. Heard approaches the higher knowledge is, therefore, quite unsatisfactory. Meditation or contemplation by which the mind is taken away from the distractions of the object and concentrated on itself is no doubt a means. But it is a secondary means. If we are to have an *open* vision, then we must see with our eyes open. In other words, our reason itself must be educated. It must be led from the view that this world or the animal's world is a reality to the view that it is not the reality but only a distorted appearance of it. The approach *through reason* reinforced by yogic meditation is the only legitimate way to knowledge.

There is another important point on which we disagree with Mr. Heard. Granting that man rises to a satisfying vision of reality, is there an end beyond this knowledge? In Vedanta, this knowledge is itself the end. The knot of the heart is loosened. The blind will-to-live is no longer there. The immortality of the body does not interest the man who has found the immortality of the spirit. The freed man has no incentive to move the world. He may no doubt act for the spiritual welfare of his fellow men. But this is not an end in itself. When a man has risen from a dream, he has no strong reformist propensities with regard to the social order in the dream-world. Such a man, then, having risen above time, may refuse *to make history*. He may well be compared to God who, knowing all, yet apparently does nothing to check the course of events governed by human passions. This Oriental attitude does not easily commend itself to the European mind. And so Mr. Heard says :—

" . . . .Granted that the final development must be purely psychical, purely transcending the material, still, some further steps may be possible and advisable before that final step. . . . "

He is, however, not dogmatic. He is prepared to admit, " We do not know how a man of higher knowledge will behave ".. Indeed, we may not know this. But we know one thing. If right knowledge is necessary to right willing, as Mr. Heard suggests, there must be a certain correlation between them. If your knowledge so far transcends all motives of action that no motive is left behind, the correlation is destroyed. The freed man who has no illusions has no further purpose in life which he might achieve. " Whatever had to be done has been done, and whatever had to be completed has been completed." He serves no evolutionary purpose. He has gone beyond good and evil.

Mr. Heard's approach to the problem of curing man's social ills is unexceptionable. It is undoubtedly a great truth that man must cure himself before he can cure others. The new order can only be initiated by those true doctors who are completely free from every form of mental neurosis. But it is hardly possible to persuade any one to seek this higher knowledge in order to save society or to advance the evolution of man. Men will only turn to it in an escapist mood, when their faith in man and society is shaken. Reformist tendencies do not belong to *para-vidya*. Mr. Heard, however, believes in psycho-physical evolution. He says :—

" We have not given psycho-physical evolution a fair chance. We must not desert this world until we have proved whether, under the most intelligent methods and applying all contemporary knowledge, psychological, economic and social, a viable and progressive society could develop. It is possible that there might be a way of living whereby man's bodily needs and psychical advance could both be provided for by the creation of a society in which the prime generating force was neither fear nor greed, but the realisation of a unifying consciousness. . . ."

The book is undoubtedly of paramount interest at the present time. It shows a way of life which is certainly novel for the European mind, naturally extravert. The great truth which Mr.

Heard propounds is that the real evil lies within us and not without us. We unnecessarily blame circumstances and society. But these are only a projection of our self. The real evil lies in the latter. We must transcend our present strangulated individuality. When we have done so, the very reason for the present competitive life will vanish. Mr. Heard's attempt is in the right direction and deserves praise.

G. R. MALKANI

# CIVILIZATION IN EAST AND WEST*

Under this title Mr. H. N. Spalding of the University of Oxford has produced a masterly volume. He speaks of it as an introduction to the study of human progress and looks upon it as a pioneer work "to pull to pieces and criticize and improve". In its bold sweep of all human cultures and its sympathetic understanding of diverse civilizations, it worthily upholds the high traditions of Oxford scholarship. It is redolent of that gentle Oxford irony which can laugh at the traditions of Curzonian superiority, and even more of that voice of Oxford, Matthew Arnold, who could look at life as a whole and steadily.

To a generation that has grown up in the Spenglerian tradition of a plurality of cultures and a decline of all cultures into mere civilizations, corpses of something that was great and living but has now ceased to grow, Mr. Spalding's work, aiming as it does at a synthesis of civilizations, must come as a refreshing fillip. Not that he believes that any one civilization can be only a monotonous copy of another : "Each of the rational civilizations looks at some aspect of Reality which gives it its character and distinguishes it from the rest." Nor does he believe that there is a gulf between them. But no civilization—and that is his complaint—has succeeded in "seeing Reality as a whole". He has a burning faith that it is possible to do so and that some civilization of the future, the Coming Kingdom, will succeed in establishing an order in which nations can live in peace and harmony, all realizing their common origin and their common destiny.

Apart from the biological state, which just marks the beginning of the onward march of humanity, the civilizations of the past are classified into four varieties. As examples of the materialist state he mentions the India of Kautilya, Japan, and modern Europe, especially the Fascist States. Since Socrates is looked upon by the author as one of the greatest teachers of mankind, it may be inferred that the Athens of Socrates and Plato cannot be altogether fitted into the framework of the materialist state ; but in details there will always be room for difference of opinion. China and the Nordic races are taken as the representatives of the Moral State. "China has solved, as no other country has ever succeeded in solving, the problem of combining the personal originality of the higher civilizations with the social solidarity of the primitive world." So too he waxes eloquent over the character which has enabled Britain to build up a great democracy. "All through life the Englishman remains at school....The House of Commons is very like a public school : bumptiousness is hated, courage is admired, a man is valued for himself." Perhaps the author would agree with the character in a certain drama who speaks of every Englishman as an average Englishman, for "it is a national characteristic". Without this characteristic the greatest empire that the world has ever seen could not have been built up, still less maintained with a remarkable genius for adaptation to meet new situations, winning by bending. The Germans too are Nordic, but their genius has flowered in the higher regions of the spirit, music especially.

Under the Moral-Spiritual State Mr.

* *Civilization in East and West. An Introduction to the Study of Human Progress.* By H. N. SPALDING. (Oxford University Press. 15*s*.)

Spalding gives us a very sympathetic survey of Israel, Islam and Catholicism. But to readers in India it is the discussion of the Spiritual State which will be perhaps of the greatest interest, for it covers Hinduism, Buddhism and Holy Russia. We have grown so accustomed to the atheism of Bolshevist Russia that Mr. Spalding's account of Holy Russia will come with double-distilled freshness, especially when we remember that many scholars of Western Europe are apt to look upon the Russians as mere Asiatic barbarians who have hardly any claim to be called Europeans. We would fain linger on so fascinating a topic, but we must pass on to see what the author has to say about India, especially since he is the founder of the Spalding Professorship of Eastern Religions and Ethics at Oxford University and has had the courage to appoint an Indian to that coveted post. The reviewer remembers the Oxford of three decades ago when there was an ill-concealed prejudice against the influx of Indian students as so much "brown mass". It is an achievement for Oxford to have now a little colouring even within the sacred coterie of Oxford dons. One might *a priori* expect that Mr. Spalding would wax eloquent over the achievements of India in the spiritual field. And so he does: "India seeks God as no other civilization has done." He places Buddha among the greatest teachers of the world. But he also displays most unexpectedly a remarkable frankness and candour in his consciousness of the weak points in the armour of India. Such frankness coming from an Englishman who had spent a lifetime in India would be put down to mere prejudice. Coming from an Englishman who has never set foot on Indian soil and yet has given away thousands of pounds to found a professorship of Eastern Religions and Ethics, such frankness can only be taken as the chiding of a parent or a friend. He frankly admits that "the Hindu ideal of character will not be ethical, but spiritual". If the moral is not the highest category, Indians may be expected to "lack social morality: the Indian is apt to be litigious, untruthful, a nepotist with a feeble sense of virtue." "The Indian imagination lacks discipline and is apt itself to be a jungle....Indian thought, again, is too easily hospitable to inconsistencies." This is what is often mistaken for tolerance by Indians themselves. So much energy is spent in talking about God that God's creatures are apt to be lost sight of. So it is intelligible that our author should write: "But it is in its imperfect conception of the social virtues and social institutions that Hinduism is most sadly to seek. Lying is politeness; it is only the peoples whose interest is the solidarity of society who value highly the telling of truth." And so towards the end he sums up: "The Englishman despises the Indian for lying, the Indian despises the Englishman for pursuing appearances—*maya*; for the ideal of the one is the Truth-speaking that knits society together, and of the other the Truth-seeking that restores the soul to the Godhead." Such an opinion is likely to wound, but truth is nothing if it has not the courage to prick bubbles and save us from the tyranny of words. We have come to a stage when in the wake of our political awakening we think it but right that we should put ourselves forth as the leaders of the world of thought. But no one who knows is likely to be completely taken in so long as the spectre of caste overshadows Indian life. Caste as it has come to be has led to a narrowing of our human sympathy, it has raised walls around us within whose sacred precincts none but our caste-men can hope to enter. It is sought to compensate for lack of practical sympathy by tall talks on Vedanta. In the meantime in Kohat, as elsewhere, a high-caste child may be left to drown in a well in the presence of its mother because the only person who can save it is an untouchable sweeper!

And so Mr. Spalding bows his head in reverence to the Upanishadic Brahman and passes on in his quest of the Coming Kingdom. It must be one "in which the things of the spirit flourish and the

things of the body are not disregarded". He wants the Neo-Renaissance and the Xeno-Renaissance to be the father and mother of the World-Renaissance. The former implies a going back to the original civilizations in their purity with the accretions of ages purged away. The latter implies a grafting of the new on the old. And then will follow the synthesis of the World Renaissance. It is here that one finds oneself lost in the maze of life. Buddhism, Platonism and Christianity are said between them to have conquered Asia, Europe and America, "for all their outward differences are at heart one and the same". One can enjoy the warmth of feeling with which Mr. Spalding writes his concluding chapter, but one is led to wonder whether like the Indians he too has not been a little hospitable to inconsistencies. Perhaps he is not, but he has not made it plain. He has whetted our appetite, but not quite satisfied it. He has not fully brought out the significance of the great words of Jesus: "The Kingdom of God is within you." Abou Ben Adhem's religion was perhaps nearer the heart of God than that of those who sought for Him everywhere except where He is most easily found—in the depths of the human heart.

In a book so rich one misses the friendly aid of an index. No review can do full justice to a work that is so balanced in its judgments, so full of generous praise all round, not unmixed with kindly criticism, whether it be of caste-ridden Indian or of gold-hunting Englishman, or of dreamy Russian. The book as a whole may be conceived to be a commentary on those thoughtful lines of Robert Bridges:—

> "Each race and tribe is as a flower
> Set in God's garden with its dower
> Of special instinct; and man's grace,
> Compact of all, must all embrace."

A. R. WADIA

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*In the Time of Tyrants: Poems, with an Introductory Note on Pacifist Faith and Necessity.* By WILLIAM SOUTAR. (Published by the Author, Wilson Street, Perth, Scotland.)

William Soutar has a message, if not unique, at least uniquely expressed. To label him a Marxist indicates the trend of his thought; it does not serve to classify him. Pitted against the general discord and strife, the pacifist, compelled by the paradox of his position to *be* his faith, wages a lonely battle, sustained by a faith which is the certainty of imagination. "There is a limit to the dehumanizing tendency in institutions beyond which exploiting and endurance cannot go."

In the words of William Blake, whom he quotes in the Introductory Note, "All that can be annihilated must be annihilated", in order that that brotherhood which implies the ratification of individuality may take root in a new social order. In that order classlessness and the abolition of economic privilege will be factors vital to the rebirth of ecclesiastical government and orthodoxy.

These poems reveal the intimate soul experience of one who has realized that life is guarded by death lest life should be betrayed, and that man, when he fails to act creatively, brings on his own destruction.

If these poems remain restricted to a private edition, so much the worse for a public which needs them, not only for their specific message but also because there is a crying need for all the beauty procurable in the world to-day, and this book is a little gem.

D. C. T.

# ON SATYAGRAHA *

This is a notable addition to the growing number of books dealing with Satyagraha as a positive and dynamic rule of life for the individual as well as for communities and nations. The more immediate purpose of the author is to show how it is capable of being used in the place of war, and with better and more enduring results. Mr. Krishnalal Shridharani is described as a "disciple" of Gandhi. He was an inmate of the Sabarmati Ashram, and followed the Mahatma on the historic Dandi March. But we believe that Gandhiji has *no* disciples at all in the accepted sense of that word. At any rate, the claim, made apparently by the publishers, should not be taken to imply that Mahatma Gandhi approves of the book as an authoritative exposition of the ideal of Satyagraha. The necessity to bear this qualification in mind will be evident from certain considerations to which we shall presently draw attention.

The book is divided into three parts which are entitled : The Technique, the Practice and the Theory of Satyagraha. The order chosen by the author has the merit of chronological sequence, though there is much inevitable overlapping. It has, however, the advantage of emphasising one of Gandhiji's oft-repeated confessions, *viz.*, that he was content at every stage only with the *next* step. All great formative ideas, especially in the ethical sphere, are crystallised by a species of induction, and are subsequently strengthened and modified by being applied in specific cases. Such at least has been the truth about the Mahatma and his ideal. Each has grown with the growth of the other !

The subject-matter of the book is partly history, partly exegesis. The history is impressionist, while the commentary is free from pedantry on the one hand and dogmatism on the other. We are still too near the events of the last decade to take a purely objective view of them. Though there are no conscious inaccuracies, the emotional attitudes of the author are never left in doubt. As the book is primarily intended for Western readers, it stands in danger of being underrated as mere propaganda, or overrated as an authoritative exposition of Satyagraha. Actually, it is a courageous attempt of one earnest seeker to interpret Satyagraha according to his own temperament and training. In doing so, he is necessarily bound to come into conflict with other view-points than his own. For instance, the author makes the challenging remark that the reader must be prepared for "two appraisals of Satyagraha,—Gandhi's Satyagraha and Satyagraha in the light of recent events in India". That the ideal of Satyagraha can grow even beyond the power of its author to grasp it may be readily enough conceded. But that therefore any kind of development of it must be welcomed is a proposition which, if granted, might well end in the stultification of Satyagraha itself ! The author's distinction between two brands of Satyagraha smacks too much of the parallel distinction between two brands of Christianity—that of Christ and that of the churches ! Freedom of commentary is not absolute ; it is naturally conditioned by the limits of the central idea or principle, which it is sought to explain.

Again, in the Introduction, the author's statement that "Satyagraha will flourish in the West better than in the East" because of the organisational superiority of the West over the East, seems to be based on a wrong approach to Satyagraha. If organisation succeeds, how can the merit go to Satyagraha ? What about the *milieu*, the background, the genius of the race ? It is these that condition the nature of our responses to our environment. It would take us too far afield to show that Satyagraha is not something which can be super-

* *War Without Violence.* By KRISHNALAL SHRIDHARANI. (Victor Gollancz, Ltd., London. 9*s.*)

imposed anywhere and at any time so as to ensure better results. It argues, in our opinion, an imperfect appreciation of the *spiritual content* of Satyagraha when an attempt is made, however unconsciously, to magnify the outer shell. This is enforced by a casual remark of the author on p. 73 that "an unknown man can die for a cause" without any effect. The author is stressing the importance of publicity for rousing mass consciousness; but the true Satyagrahi, even if unknown, must have his influence radiating from his own obscure point, until it embraces an ever-widening circle. And to deny all spiritual value to the labours of the obscure is to go against the light. After this, it is not surprising to find our author deploring, on p. 177, that terrorists were martyrs who have not gained the admiration they deserved! It is a significant aside which shows how the author's conception of Satyagraha is at least—catholic!

Nor do we like the author's comparison of Gandhiji with Mussolini as men who never thought out their next moves beforehand. There *is* an important difference. Mussolini is Machiavelli brought up to date. But the Mahatma has never forsaken the lodestar of truth and non-violence. No man of comparable greatness in the history of the world has so often and so voluntarily stood in the confessional! *He* has been his own most unsparing critic; and on the classic occasion when he won his case against the ruler of Rajkot, he threw away his gains because he felt they were vitiated by "violence". To compare such a man to Mussolini, who has battened on a series of crimes which he has acknowledged with unexampled cynicism!

The author's remarks on violence *vs.* non-violence are not sufficiently clean-cut. To say that violence aims at the annihilation of the enemy is true only figuratively. It aims rather at subjugating other wills to our own. But the genius of Satyagraha is for compromise. The true Satyagrahi *stoops to raise*! Like war, it operates as the *ultima ratio* of human relationships. But, unlike war, it makes, and indeed has, no distinctions between war-aims and peace-aims. One neglected aspect of Gandhiji's attitude bears this out. He has repeatedly declared that so far as our Muslim countrymen are concerned, he is willing to give them a blank cheque. They suffer, not from the vices of a ruling class unwilling to part with power, but with the infirmities of a weak one afraid of extinction. To reassure them, therefore, Gandhiji is prepared to surrender far more than others on his own side would approve. This is perfectly in consonance with the convictions of a Satyagrahi. It will be noticed also that he has made no such offer to the British Government. Finally, because of the identity of war- and peace-aims, the Satyagrahi comes out of *every ordeal with no trace of bitterness.* The short period of Congress Ministries in office has not brought to light *one single case* of the victimisation of those who had been called upon to deal severely with the Satyagrahis in the Non-Co-operation days. Can as much be said of any war waged in the West?

In another place, the author makes the assertion that the last Civil Disobedience Movement triumphed. This is factually wrong! The Movement collapsed, and had to be called off. It is the most complete instance of a war in which one side faded out of the picture, without explanation or apology. But the spiritual gains of it were made manifest only later on. This shows that Satyagraha, so long as it conforms to its basic ideals, *can never fail.*

The author's treatment of the actual story of the Civil Disobedience Movement is accompanied by picturesque illustrations and diagrams intended to suggest a scientific and rounded idea of Satyagraha as an adequate substitute for war. But one gets an impression that the rigours of the discipline either do not so much matter or are merely accessory. This is unfortunate because it gives a wrong view of essential values.

The book concludes with a list of sources and references which impress us with the painstaking thoroughness of the author's preparation for his task.

P. MAHADEVAN

*Men and Ideas*. By GRAHAM WALLAS. With a Preface by GILBERT MURRAY. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 8*s*. 6*d*.)

In a preface to these occasional essays and addresses by Graham Wallas, collected by his daughter, Professor Murray recalls regretfully the social and intellectual order which existed in the late nineteenth century and which Europe has now almost lost. Wallas typified that order at its best. Without believing in any traditional religious creed, he was convinced of the importance of seeking truth and acting for the public good. In Professor Murray's words, "he was a free man, and accepted the duties incumbent on a free man, according to the old Liberal code." And his originality as a teacher lay in his capacity to observe and think for himself and to encourage others to do likewise. These essays, therefore, are of value less for their subject-matter than for the temper of mind which they reflect. Indeed the subjects of some of them, such as those on "Lord Sheffield on the London School Board" or "The British Civil Service", have a very limited interest. But there are others in each section, biographical, social, or educational, of more general appeal, such as the two essays on Jeremy Bentham or that on "Mental Training and the World Crisis". And in all of them we are conscious of a mind concerned to be both true and creative. Again and again, from different angles, we find Wallas inviting his readers to approach life as an experiment and apply to it the same free but concentrated effort of mind which a modern scientist brings to the work of invention. He was in short a humanist who embodied the scientific spirit. And if the quiet and lucid reason which he served lacked the power in the world at large to redeem the unreasoning impulses which have now overwhelmed it, its day will come again.

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

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*Princess in Tartary: A Play for Marionettes*. By DANIELE VARÈ. (John Murray, London. 5*s*.)

Signor Varè's play is an exquisite trifle. It was originally intended to amuse a little girl in Rome though subsequently licked into its present shape during the tedium of one of those endless Arms Limitation Conferences in Geneva. Signor Varè's sense of the ludicrous is as acute as his gaiety is wholesome and contagious. In his marionette world, the parrot is more sensible than the Emperor and the Great Khan of Tartary is as modern as an American millionaire. We are apparently in a Never-never-never-land, oscillating between the Chinese Emperor's Throne Room at Cambalùc and the sand-dunes of Mongolia, the territory of the Great Khan.

The story, of course, is very flimsy: the Great Khan marries the Chinese Princess and in a fit of absent-mindedness leaves her behind him. Meanwhile the ubiquitous Marco Polo is commissioned by the Chinese Empress to discover the whereabouts of the Princess. Marco Polo, the Princess and the Khan himself confront one another in the Mongolian desert. As soon as recognition of his wife is forced on him, the Khan blandly exchanges her for a Bologna sausage. They all meet again in the Throne Room in Cambalùc and the Great Khan agrees this time to marry the Lady-in-Waiting because, "sweet and silent, she's the only perfect bride".

In this seemingly exotic world wars are started by the newspapers "and nobody really knows what for"; matrimonial advertisements are in fashion, but they are costly. The Emperor is a stickler for etiquette and the Great Khan is always guided by his Note-book, a primitive sort of *Mein Kampf*. The two parrots are the humanest of the lot, wise and tender and loving. This tantalizing puppet world seems to be at once far off and near; these characters make us laugh and think as well; the interspersed songs are gay and also sad; but the illustrations are a sheer delight.

K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

*The Heart of the Gospel : A Re-statement of the Bible in Terms of Modern Thought and Modern Need.* By GEORGE TOWNSHEND. (Lindsay Drummond Ltd., London. 7*s.* 6*d.*)

The sub-title of this book is important. It is concerned with the spiritual message of the Bible in its entirety. The view here developed is that the Gospel of Jesus is not confined to the New Testament, as is generally thought, but is a continuous self-revelation of God from the creation of the world, reaching fruition in Jesus, and continuing even after him till a new heaven and a new earth are established among men. As against the prevalent tendency to abstract Jesus from the rest of the Bible, to confine the Christian Gospel to him and even then to look to him merely for ethical and social inspiration, the author finds in Jesus and his message an essentially religious significance, *viz.*, the Universal Spirit gradually unfolding itself to man and spiritualising him. World history as depicted in the Old Testament has, according to our author, this essentially spiritual purpose, and only as man identifies himself with this purpose does he progress.

Obviously the author writes for Western readers whose history and religion begin and end with Christianity. If he had been faced with older civilizations and religions, it would not have been so easy to imagine that the Bible contains the alpha and omega of divine revelation. He of course admits that God has revealed Himself to other peoples also. At the same time he speaks of the history and religious experience contained in the Old Testament as that of all mankind, describing it as "world-history" or "universal history" and thus ignoring the history of other peoples. If the message of Jesus is universal it is because of the quality of the message itself, not because of its historical setting. Hence the tendency in unorthodox Christian circles and in non-Christian countries to go direct to the universal aspect of Jesus' teaching, neglecting the local features derived from its historical background. Especially for those in non-Christian lands the view of world-history and the religious experience of man presented in this book will appear to be altogether too narrow.

Lack of contact with other races and cultures is responsible also for imagining that Western civilization is based on Christianity. If by Christianity is meant the Gospel for which Jesus lived and died, Western civilization as we know it to-day is its very antithesis. At a time when in the West the Prince of Peace is being every day nailed to the cross the following words of the author appear hollow indeed : "We look back across nineteen centuries of Christian civilization and see its lowly founder illuminated by the glory of his posthumous achievement. We know the gospel as the Magna Charta of the West." Would that this were so ! If it were, the West, instead of being a menace to humanity in its effort to dominate the earth with its guns, would be the servant of all.

Another common misconception in the West which is reproduced by our author is that there was nothing ascetic about Jesus. The Church has to find arguments to support the material conveniences and comforts which Western civilization has produced, and what better than to say that all these are the fruits of a Christian civilization which believes in the abundant life which the Master came to give ? But does not abundant life refer rather to the things of the spirit ? If so, does it not mean that spiritual ends must control human life even to the extent of impoverishing the physical life if the two conflict ? Did not Jesus say of himself that he had not where to lay his head ? Asceticism need not necessarily be morbid or negative. It was not so in the case of Jesus. It may be distasteful to the West, but that is not to say that it was not an essential part of Jesus' life and teaching. The way of Christ is after all the way of the Cross, the way of self-renunciation.

The book is a sign of the times. It is an effort to penetrate to essentials. This the author accomplishes with clarity and

remarkable success, and summons Christendom to the realization of the fact that ultimately the message of the Gospel is nothing else than that God is in earnest about spiritualising mankind. This message, however, is not the preserve of Christianity alone but the heart of all Religion, whatever its shape or form. Nevertheless, it is well to have it so ably and so directly put forward by our author in the case of Christianity.

BHARATAN KUMARAPPA

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*The Hindu Philosophy of Conduct, Being Class-Lectures on the Bhagavad Gita.* Vol. III. By the late M. RANGACHARYA. (G. A. Natesan and Co., Madras. Rs. 5/-)

This translation of the last six chapters of the *Gita*, with lengthy commentaries comprising thirty-one lectures, and an excellent index and glossary, is the work of a former Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology at the Presidency College, Madras. The Western student will value in the commentaries the inclusion of much traditional thought which has accumulated concerning the text, and the frequent references to the views of Rāmānuja, Madhva and Śaṁkara. Obviously prepared with care, sincerity and religious feeling, it will appeal to earnest disciples : yet we miss that deep penetration and philosophical synthesis which distinguish Sri Aurobindo's *Essays on the Gita.* Indeed it may be questioned if Mr. Rangacharya has appreciated the culminating significance of the last section of the *Gita*, with which he is here concerned. It is generally considered, he remarks, as "supplementary"; however, he admits that these six dialogues of the *Gita* "shed indispensable light on many obscure points and make the *Gita* as a whole logically and philosophically complete". But it is in these very discourses that the relation between Being and Becoming, Soul and Nature, the three *gunas*, the way to the Supreme Spirit, the supreme liberation and Krishna's final and essential word to his devotees are revealed.

The world's greatest scriptures, of which no doubt the *Gita* is one, can be only partially understood by the unillumined, but they attract, hold and guide us and progressively, even if at first dimly, reveal their message. The thousands of commentaries and sermons which they have inspired have generally only a relatively temporal and local value and often mislead and hide, contrary to intention. This seems true even of Śaṁkara's commentary on the *Gita.* We are often told that the *Gita's* emphasis is upon Karma-Yoga or upon Bhakti-Yoga, that its chief message is this or that. We believe that the *Gita* has its own profound, basic philosophy, consistent throughout, but that within that is harmoniously included, to serve its purpose, the spiritual and psychological experience of various ventures of Hindu thought. It is a serious mistake not to study the *Gita* as a whole and we should attempt to become aware of those great realizations underlying its details : the result of the larger view is a synthetic, integral yoga of the widest human significance.

It is reasonably held that the *Upanishad* from which Krishna milked most effectively was the *Isha. There* will be found the truths which illumine the entire *Gita.* Both the *Isha-Upanishad* and the *Bhagavad-Gita* are opposed to the abandonment of life and activity ; both are more consonant with the conception of the *Lila*, and the acceptance of life, than with Śaṁkara's development of the doctrine of *Maya* and withdrawal from action. Both are equally impregnated with the thought of unity. Indeed the eighteen discourses of the *Gita* seem but an expansion of the conciser statement made in the eighteen verses of the *Isha.* Near the close of each work we find statements suggestive of the most essentially theosophic doctrine of Recollection, that is, that man through his inherent memory has access to the truth and the divinity which he seeks.

E. H. BREWSTER

*The Yoga System of Health.* By YOGI VITHALDAS. (Faber and Faber, Ltd., London. 7*s.* 6*d.*)

When Yogi Vithaldas's *The Yoga System of Health* came into my hand for review my first impulse was to turn to its Introduction to see if the author had emphasised the importance of a yoga practiser having a well-controlled mind, an emphasis seldom given by modern writers on yoga.

To achieve such a controlled mind, without which concentration is not possible, rules of discipline have to be observed in day-to-day living. The Hindu Sages realized the great value of such disciplinary restrictions in fashioning life after a divine and spiritual ideal which, to them, was the ultimate goal of human evolution. For the attainment of that ideal, the realization of one's true self, deep concentration of mind, untroubled by bodily ills and undisturbed by cravings, is essential; and for this steadying concentration they evolved through long personal experience the different yoga systems which form the richest treasure of Hindu theology. For perfect fitness of body and mind they prescribed Hatha Yoga and its various Asanas and therewith laid down many regulations regarding diet, association and environment and also regarding the cultivation of detachment from desires and the allurements of the world.

Writers on Hatha Yoga often overlook the importance of those rules, taking the practice of the Asanas as the sufficient means of attaining the results. Nothing could be more dangerous. The exponents of Hatha Yoga to the masses usually take it as only another of the many methods of physical culture practicable, irrespective of the life one leads. Shri Vithaldas, in fact, writes that Yoga "calls for no abnegation of the things of life and looks upon the indulgences of smoking and drinking with a tolerant eye, considering that progress in yoga automatically destroys the need of what after all are drugs occasioned by nervous instability". With this outlook, he has naturally proceeded directly to describe the various poses, omitting reference to the mode of living and thinking prescribed. He has not directed the attention of his readers even to the necessity of mental concentration on particular nerve centres when posing in particular Asanas. The descriptions of the Asanas are given clearly, but I feel that I should warn beginners against thinking that Yoga really looks tolerantly upon the indulgences of life.

A disciplined and pure life, a restrained and virtuous mind free from cravings, an attitude of *Vairagya,* detachment from the material world, earnestness in the quest of the Self and faith in spiritual realities—these are the prerequisites of Yoga, the different systems of which all aim at *chittva-laya,* the expansion of self-consciousness and its merging in the all-embracing Supreme Consciousness. Hatha Yoga, like the other systems, is no more than the training of the body in conjunction with the mind, with that ultimate end in view. Practised without that outlook and temperament and in disregard of the strict rules of discipline, it can at best give only transient results in the form of bodily culture. It can also entail adverse physical consequences, particularly its inverted and difficult poses. In *Sirshasana,* for instance, in which there is a rush of blood to the brain, if the uncontrolled mind is pursuing desires which cause circulatory and nervous reactions in different directions, and if the intestinal working, as the result of unsuitable and indulgent eating, is not congenial to the physiological reactions caused by the Asana practice, no good effects, but even very dangerous ones, can follow.

Diseases difficult to cure often result from Yogic practices undertaken under inexpert advice and supervision and without the development of the right attitude and temperament for it. I cannot take up in detail the different Asanas mentioned, but I would impress on those who look admiringly on the Yoga system, not because of the spiritual culture possible through it but because of the supernormal powers or of the perfect health it can confer, not to take it up till their worldly cravings have subsided and

they have begun to realize the insignificance of mere material prospects.

Yoga is not really for the masses but only for the select few who, through a succession of lives, have arrived at the above stage of realization. To the painstaking and earnest author of this book I would suggest that when he writes more on what he calls the Yoga System of Health, he should dwell impressively on the necessity of preparedness for taking it up and on the rules and restrictions to be observed while following it.

J. M. GANGULI

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*The Blue Grove : The Poetry of the Uraons.* By W. G. ARCHER, with a Foreword by ARTHUR WALEY. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

The Uraons, as many readers may know, "are an aboriginal tribe of Dravidian stock concentrated in the western half of Chota Nagpur in Central India". Mr. Archer was "subdivisional officer there from 1934 to 1937", and to such good use did he put his time that he has been able to collect in this book a large number of songs and riddles, together with some specimens of the figurative conversation which precedes a suggestion of marriage.

The book, let us admit at once, has more ethnological than literary interest. Indeed, Mr. Archer informs us that all the songs are intended to accompany some activity of an Uraon's life, and that the song would not exist if it were not associated with the work or the amusement in hand and that the latter would be considered imperfect if no song were attached to it. Of the people he reports that "to the earliest observers a capacity for cheerful hard work was the most notable characteristic of the Uraons ; and a sturdy gaiety, an exultation in bodily physique and a sense of fun are still their most obvious qualities." There is, in fact, surprisingly little expression of sexuality and almost none of religion in these songs. Here is a specimen :—

"The mud bungalow you built, father,
The mud bungalow has fallen,
Let it fall, mother, let it fall, father,
When the Pakote water burns, I shall rebuild it."

The translator, fortunately, tells us that "in this poem the collapse of the house symbolises the going of the bride. The implication is that nothing short of a radical change of heart will give the father the spirit to beget another daughter. At Pakote in Gumla subdivision there is a small stream which is famous for its coldness."

Some of the riddles are amusing : for example, "A thousand candles in a dish" (Stars), "Go it can but come it cannot" (An arrow), "The son who is born before the father" (Smoke before flame), "A finger in the stomach and a stone over the head" (A ring), and (an image well-known to the ancient Greeks) "Four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, three legs at night" (Childhood, manhood, old age).

We find, too, that the Uraons have a "tabu against using a correct name after dark, the tabu springing from a sense of the identity of a thing and its name, and the apprehension that to name an animal may either cause it harm if it is a domestic one or cause it to do harm if it is a wild one". Thus, a snake becomes "a rope", a tiger "the long-tailed one", and a sheep "the woolly-coated one" : and these, says Mr. Archer, "are used as substitute counters in the same way as a cow, a deer or a marrow are used as symbols for a bride in a marriage dialogue".

He enables us to catch some feeling of a social life easy-going, happy and unsophisticated ; but it is a little doubtful whether these snatches can rightly be termed "the poetry" of the Uraons.

CLIFFORD BAX

*Peaks and Lamas*. By MARCO PALLIS. (Cassell and Co., Ltd., London. 18*s*.)

This is one of those rare books which arrest and hold one's interest from the very first page. The author is that very unusual combination, a mountaineer and a philosopher, as expressed so well in his opening remarks :—

> The bodily exertion of climbing, by forcing the mind to lie fallow for a time and concentrate on purely animal needs, will have prepared it in just the right way for subsequent excursions into more abstract realms. There is some advantage in first reducing mental, no less than physical weight, before calling on the spirit, thus lightened of its ballast, to take flight towards the stars.

His expedition consisted of five well-seasoned climbers, all well known in other fields of activity. Three of their journeys in what are known as the Tibetan borderlands are here described in delightful and engaging language. The first was on the pilgrim way to Gangotri, and characteristic is the description of a tall mysterious pilgrim "with eyes that pierced like stilettos, his coal-black hair gathered up in a knot, in his hand an iron-shod staff like a spear ....We thought of him as the god Wotan, disguised as the Wanderer—for he really might have stepped straight out of *Siegfried*. When he brought his staff sharply down on the rock, I momentarily expected sparks to fly out." This was in 1933, when my own group was struggling on cars along the trackless wastes of the Mongolian border from Peking to North-East Tibet. Our own experience of Sikkim and Ladakh was some ten years earlier.

Very interesting is the account of a strikingly handsome race encountered on the Baspa River after the Nela Pass. Neither Indian nor Mongoloid, they live "on the borderland of the Hindu and Tibetan Traditions". The men are tall and powerful, the women like Greek goddesses, and the children "little angels of beauty". Unfortunately the photos taken here were failures. "The Himalayan germ, once caught", writes the author, "works inside one like a relapsing fever; it is ever biding its time before breaking out again with renewed virulence."

Sikkim in 1936 was the second borderland explored, and there the learned Lachen Lama, who taught Madame David-Neel, greatly impressed Mr. Pallis. Although quite a philosopher, he belongs, like all the Sikkim Lamas, to the Red sect in one of its forms. Hence we find Mr. Pallis attempting to idealize the obvious and degenerate sexuality of the Yab-Yum (male-female) deities which abound in the Red Sikkim monasteries. He quotes from Woodroffe's Tantrik works at some length on this subject and has evidently been considerably influenced by them. Some examples of these "Divinities with their Consort-Energies", at Lamayuru Red Monastery in Ladakh, accompany his apologia. The quotation concludes with the following which is, I hope, sufficient to indicate how the Tantrikas degrade the loftiest religious concepts :—

> The pair are inseparable, so they are shown interlocked in sexual union, touching at all possible points of contact. The marriage is consummated in the midst of a halo of flames, the fire of Supreme Wisdom which burns up all obstacles.

As H. P. Blavatsky says (see my review of *The Iconography of Tibetan Lamaism* in THE ARYAN PATH for January 1940) :—

> Esotericism ignores both sexes. Its highest Deity is sexless as it is formless, neither Father nor Mother, and its first manifested beings, celestial and terrestrial alike, become only gradually androgynous and finally separate into distinct sexes.

Allowing for this aspect, there is much of interest in the author's Lamaistic studies. The photographs are of quite exceptional quality, both as beautiful pictures and as reproductions that resemble fine engravings. The third part deals with Ladakh, where the Red influence is considerably offset by the Yellow, and much might be said of this section did my allotted space permit. I can only conclude by promising the reader a truly fascinating and indeed an unique narrative.

BASIL CRUMP

*The Defence of Democracy*. By JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY. (Jonathan Cape, Ltd., London. 10*s*. 6*d*.)

While most books on Bolshevism, Fascism, Nazism and democracy have been rendered somewhat obsolete by recent events, this book, though written before the German seizure of Czechoslovakia, remains unaffected. This is because Mr. Murry deals with fundamentals, and probes so deep as to touch the underlying identity of politics, economics, ethics and religion. Every page contains sentences opening endless vistas of thought, such as "Luther shattered belief in authority, because he restored the authority of belief." The notes at the end are equally stimulating. The subtlety of intellect that Mr. Murry developed as a literary critic and the transcendental faith that springs from his spiritual nature have combined to make this book akin to Plato's *Republic* and to Paul's *Epistles*.

Such a work cannot be summarized. I shall only separate a thread of thought. Fascism and Nazism, being based on contempt for the masses, contain no constructive criticism of society; and, being rooted in the worship of successful brigandage, cannot become international or stable. Marxism contains the principle that can regenerate society. "The living unity of society and God was as vivid to Marx as the vision of a Hebrew prophet." But modern Marxians, unable to distinguish what is vital, concentrate on the economic structure, and miss the meaning of democracy. Political power has been separated from property, so that the proletariat, as visualized by Marx, does not exist in England. Democracy precludes class war. At the same time, however, political democracy has not brought social democracy. The necessary change can be effected not through revolution, but through a fuller manifestation of the spirit of democracy. "The dynamic that achieved democracy was, in the main, a dynamic not of interest but of morality and religion." Until the individual returns to his inannihilable reality, the Christ in his own heart, and is transformed from within, there is no hope for democracy or humanity.

"Democracy cannot be imperialistic without destroying itself." England's major problem is "the democratization of India". Commercial safeguards, obviously, should not be made the condition: one cannot serve both Christ and Mammon.

C. NARAYANA MENON

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An open mind is the best ally of liberalism. There is not much danger of a totalitarian complex so long as a nation can laugh at itself. *The New Statesman and Nation* is rendering a service to democracy through its bantering column, "This England", made up of ludicrous cullings from English periodicals. The prize paragraph in that column for the 24th of February is an excerpt from a letter in *The Sheffield Telegraph and Independent* :—

> As an Englishman and a Christian I was sickened, as I am sure thousands of others would be, to read of the Sunday football match played by our men in France, and still more of our presumably Christian B. B. C. not merely condoning it but encouraging this display of moral weakness on the part of our English soldiers at a time when they have such a grand opportunity to witness to their French brothers of that faith which more than anything else has made England the power she has been for good in the world.

It is easy for those outside a religion to see the inconsistencies in its creed and the folly of observances neither prompted by the heart nor justifiable by the mind. But that profits them little unless they see that their own creed is equally a blend of spiritual truth and mummery. The performance of duty on the basis of universal moral principles—unselfishness, honesty, truthfulness and self-control—is enjoined by all religions; the value of ritualistic observances peculiar to any one creed should be impartially examined by its followers.

# THE TENTH ALL-INDIA ORIENTAL CONFERENCE

The Presidential Address read on March 21st at the Tirupati Session of the All-India Oriental Conference—a report of which specially prepared for us by Shri K. C. Varadachari follows—on behalf of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, distinguished as it is by depth and clarity of vision, has a wider than academic application. Pandit Malaviya's analysis of the importance, the scope and the needs, monetary and other, of Indological studies is masterly. India, he declares, is fast becoming, as it ought to become, the centre of such studies and research ; he looks to the day when the status and the reputation of Indian scholars shall be such as to "attract a continuous stream of scholars from abroad, as it did in the days of Nālandā and Vikramaśilā". He urges the importance of translating important unpublished MSS. ; of specialization by different centres in specific lines, *e.g.*, Islamic, ancient Indian etc. ; and of translations from the mediæval Indian literatures into English and Hindi. The study of the spread of Indian culture to other parts of Asia, he believes, has an important bearing upon present problems :—

> It will show how a culture can succeed in propagating itself without the help of the sword or the bomb, if it possesses inherent merit.

But Pandit Malaviya's most significant words deal with the need of India and the world for unity and for tolerance. The message of our ancient culture and philosophy he sees as tolerance and appreciation of views different from our own if they are honestly held. He traces the ascendancy in most places of the spirit of intolerance and national selfishness to the fact that

> matter is allowed to dominate over spirit, and the claims of *sreyas* or the spiritually desirable are being superseded in favour of *preyas* or the worldly attractive. This is happening not only in the West and the Far East but, I am sorry to say, in our own Mother-land also, whose children have not been acting up to the best spirit of our ancient religion, philosophy and culture. There cannot be any peace in this world unless humanity learns to prefer *sreyas* to *preyas* and accepts the ideal of multi-cultural development and allows even the numerically weak to work out their own cultural ideals without any let or hindrance from the numerically or physically strong.

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The Tenth Session of the All-India Oriental Conference that was held late in March at Tirupati was unique in many respects. For the first time the Conference met in a small town prominent from a religious point of view, and for the first time, too, it embraced almost all the studies that today constitute the sum of learning in India. The All-India Oriental Conference, started about twenty years ago, is the most important cultural organisation devoted to Indic studies. Every two years it meets to take stock of the progress of knowledge and to synthesize its efforts. The scholars that met at Tirupati were the most distinguished leaders of thought and represented the cultural heritage of India. Tirupati is one of the most famous shrines in India and the Conference met under the auspices of the Sri Venkateswara Oriental Institute and under the patronage of Sri Venkateswara himself. The success of the Conference was solely due to the dynamic personality of Rao Bahadur Vidyavasaspati K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar. The founder of the Benares Hindu University, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who was to have presided, could not attend due to illness, but he sent his Presidential Address and it was under his inspiration that the Conference transacted its work.

The special, and indeed the most important, feature of the Conference was the work of the sections. The presidential addresses were of the highest quality and the papers, a record number, received by the sections were declared by the respective presidents to be of a very high order. The Tirupati Session had special sections for Islamic Culture and for Arabic, Urdu and Hindi, and in the Fine Arts two additional sections on Music and Natya.

The most significant aspect of this Conference, as distinguished from previous sessions, however, was neither the spiritual nor the literary excellence of the proceedings but the artistic. The Festival of Fine Arts was opened by the well-known champion of art, Shri V. V. Srinivasa Aiyengar, former Judge of the High Court of Madras, who pleaded for concentrating all our efforts on building up an India that should realise Ananda, the Joy of Life, as taught alike in the ancient *Upanishads* and in the Tamil scriptures. A similar note was struck by the President of the Fine Arts Section, Shri O. C. Gangoly; and finally Shrimati Rukmini of Adyar, President of the Natya Section, urged making creative spiritual life the supreme preoccupation of man. The dance, she declared, is the dance of life, of creative living, of ordered thinking, of synthetic endeavour.

The Sanskrit Parisad discussed living problems and debated the possibility of devising a basic system for Sanskrit similar to that of Basic English. Pandit Pramathanath Bhattacharya of the Benares Hindu University, who was also the President of the Vedic Section, presided over the deliberations of the scholars. The patron for this section was the Maharani Saheba of Godwal, the most learned woman in the land and a scholar of repute.

The Tamil Sangam, which was a special feature of this Tenth Session, discussed the historical problem of the site of the original Cera capital—Vanchi—whether it was in Cochin or near Srirangam. The Andhra Sahitya Sammelan also met at the same time to discuss the future of the Telugu culture and language.

It is a well-recognized fact that Conferences are very beneficial. Contact between minds, the exchange of ideas, the discovery of inward unity and identity of aim, and finally the spiritual reunion of souls otherwise very much apart in space, all these happen only at such Conferences. One felt during this Conference not the "unearthly ballet of bloodless categories" but the living throb of spiritual touch, an inward interpretation of the concourse outside as some portent of the greater Unity of all Mankind. The Brotherhood of man can be realised best not on the political platform but on the spiritual platform of understanding and of sympathetic exchange of ideas, of participation in the identical search after truth. It was an education in itself.

Sri Venkateswara's shrine is a symbol of the Unity of all Hindus. But on this unique occasion, when the Tenth Session met under the broad canopy of His grace and patronage, the Unity transcended even the Hindu and realised the Unity of all Humanity. May the Tenth Session be remembered as the Session of Unity of all Culture, Eastern and Western, Hindu and Islamic.

K. C. VARADACHARI

# ENDS AND SAYINGS

*"_____ends of verse*
*And sayings of philosophers."*

HUDIBRAS

Indians at home and in every corner of the world, from Fiji to Kenya, mourn the loss of a large-hearted man and a great friend—C. F. Andrews. He was a Christian—not one of the legion who are such in name and by lip-profession, but one of the very few and rare lights of Christendom, a real follower of Jesus Christ. He came out to India a devout orthodox Christian, but the spirit of India transformed him, deepening his devotion but destroying his orthodoxy. He wrote :—

> There is a second birthday in my own life which has now been kept fresh in my memory each year for nearly thirty years with deep thankfulness to God, who is the Giver of all good gifts. The date is March 20th. For that was the day in 1904 when I first set foot on Indian soil and began my new life in the East.

He "learnt to know Christ afresh in this Eastern setting", but in the process he had "to choose whether I should obey God rather than man"; he had to fight church dogmas, such as the doctrine of eternal damnation of the heathen; and

> there were even graver evils to be fought outright, especially that of the colour bar and racial discrimination, poisoning the wells of the Christian faith in almost every land abroad, leading irresistibly to a divided Christendom. Here the fight had to be waged desperately with one's back to the wall in order to avoid quite irretrievable disaster. Lesser struggles, however important in themselves, might have to give way to this larger issue.

He lived and laboured trying to emulate the love his Master showed for the lowly and the oppressed. His death made us reread Pericles' famous funeral oration as Thucydides conjectured he would have given it, and how appropriate are the words when applied to C. F. Andrews :—

> We combine in the same citizen body great courage to undertake, and ample discussion of our undertakings; whereas in other men it is ignorance that gives boldness, and discussion that produces hesitation. Surely they will rightly be judged the bravest souls who most clearly distinguish the pains and pleasures of life, and therefore do not avoid danger. In our benevolence also we are the opposite of most men; it is not by receiving but by conferring favours that we win our friends. And he is a most constant friend who confers the favour and then tries to keep alive in the recipient, by continued kindness, a sense of obligation for it.

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In the above quotation from Mr. Andrews he refers to the grave evil of the colour bar and racial discrimination. Once again this is brought to our attention. Lady Rama Rao, wife of the Agent-General of India in South Africa, in an address at Santiniketan on March 28th, reported in *The Leader*, discussed the extremely humiliating conditions which colour prejudice imposes on the Indians in South Africa. Through the various anti-Asiatic measures sanctioned both by Government and by municipalities, and in "the more glaring acts of injustice", notably in the spheres of education and society, the colour bar is rampant. She suggested two possible alternative solutions, repatriation, and the "peaceful settling down" of the Indians, "not as a foreign element, but as South Africans, completely 'disentangled' from their Motherland (which the majority of them hardly knew)".

Would the South African Indians' renunciation of the ties with their brothers in the Home Land change their pigmentation, which is the root cause of the difficulty? Short of effecting that impossibility, will any outward measures

of conciliation taken by the victims of colour prejudice avail?

Of all the ugly brood of intolerance, colour prejudice—the utter stupidity of taking the colour of a man's garment as an index to his mentality and character—is the most unreasoning. It is active within our own borders. We here do not suffer from the legalised forms of the colour bar, but who has not read, heard and known of the scandalous treatment with which Indian ladies and gentlemen have met at the hands of members of the so-called white race.

In saying this we are not overlooking that others besides C. F. Andrews, while belonging to the white race, have unequivocally condemned the crime of colour prejudice. Thus the Metropolitan of India in a broadcast talk on the passing of C. F. Andrews said :—

> To our shame we own the strength of racial prejudice with which many Europeans have regarded the peoples of the East. A sense of essential superiority of the white man over his darker neighbour has been one of the strongest divisive forces between the East and West.

One of the ways in which the colour bar against the sons and daughters of India can be checkmated is by Indians themselves courageously refusing to put up with the expressions of this ugly prejudice. Humiliating as this manifestation is, far more humiliating is the attitude of some Indians who fancy the Europeans to be superior and ape such of their manners and habits as are the reverse of good. Not until Indians learn to respect themselves, their own traditions and the beauty and the worth of their own coloured skin will they be able to overcome the arrogance of white-skinned folk.

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In THE ARYAN PATH for July 1939 appeared a chronicle by Miss B. B. Walcott of an average day in the life of an unpretentious but justly famous Negro scientist, whose seventy-sixth year found him still devoted to his self-forgetting labours at Tuskegee Institute in the U.S.A. Dr. George Washington Carver's artistic talent was only mentioned casually in that article, but he was made a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (London) in 1916. He is better known for his achievements in research chemistry, including the development of over three hundred products from peanuts and over a hundred uses for the sweet potato. He has found many uses for waste cotton products and even for ordinary clay.

We learn from *The New York Times* for 14th February that Dr. Carver has put the capstone to his concrete beneficence by donating his life savings of about a lakh to a foundation to perpetuate research in soil building, in the utilization of waste and in the finding of new uses for native products, which he believes to be important for solving the economic problems of his section and his country.

At least as important to the world as his concrete discoveries, however, is the example of Dr. Carver's life of hard work and high ideals, of simple piety expressed in terms of the faith in which he was born and according to which he has humbly tried to live. For no life can be lived with an uplifted purpose and a selfless aim and the world not be the richer thereby.

It is appropriate, in view of India's recent bereavement in the death of Deenabandhu Andrews, to quote the closing paragraph of Miss Walcott's tribute to Dr. Carver :—

> During my life I have met three people whose spirituality was so potent as to make me feel that here indeed was one who walked with God. Dr. Carver is one of those persons. The other two were the late Dean Edward Increase Bosworth of Oberlin, Ohio, and Charles F. Andrews, the English scholar who has lived and worked many years in India with that country's magnificent poet Rabindranath Tagore.

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The great educational possibilities of the drama are overlooked by many who seek the cultural uplift of our Indian village people. Shrimati Tandra Devi brought out a few years ago a brochure on *Village Theatres*, in which she urged the revival of the moribund art of puppetry in the villages, a suggestion which Shri Nanda Lal Bose endorsed in his foreword

and one which is excellent as a stepping-stone. But the remarkable development of the collective farm theatres in the U. S. S. R. inspires even more ambitious hopes for our Indian villages. As literacy spreads—and it is bound to spread rapidly when India has the ordering of her own house—there will be scope for as striking histrionic developments in terms of India's distinctive genius as those reported from the Soviet.

The Soviet collective farm theatres, described in a recent issue of *International Literature*, increased from 89 in 1934 to about 300 in 1939. In 1938 they gave 54,000 performances and their rural spectators totalled seventeen million. Not only do these theatres entertain and unobtrusively educate but also they furnish an outlet for the emotions and the cultural aspirations of the people; they help to break down the artificial barriers between town and country and they afford invaluable training in co-operation. Besides playing in their own villages, they give successful performances, often under most untoward conditions, at collective farms within a considerable radius. The early Soviet drama, as Mr. Huntly Carter brought out in his "Comparison of the Hindu and the Soviet Systems of the Drama" (THE ARYAN PATH, April 1936), was largely propagandist, but alongside the works of contemporary Soviet playwrights the collective theatres are producing the Russian classics and plays from Shakespeare and Schiller and Molière.

India has a high dramatic tradition, but except for such beautiful dance dramas as the Kathakali dance of Malabar the theatre in general had fallen upon evil days before the contemporary renaissance in the Indian literatures brought into existence the wealth of dramas turning upon the problems of the day. Many of these plays are stage-worthy and ought to form part of a repertoire that should include simplified versions of the classic dramas, as also adaptations from fit foreign plays. Our villagers are no less intelligent and no more lacking in dramatic sense than were the Russian peasantry among whom this development has been so successful. We commend the idea of the village theatre on however modest a scale to the serious consideration of rural welfare workers and of writers of plays as well.

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The growing tendency in India towards fission along communal, linguistic and territorial lines is a just cause for concern to all who have the good of India at heart. Everything is to be welcomed that holds the possibility of overcoming in any degree that destructive tendency by strengthening the bonds of our cultural unity. Such is the proposal for the establishment of a National Art Gallery. The current issue of *Roopa-Lekha*, the bi-annual organ of the All-India Fine Arts and Crafts Society at New Delhi, appeals earnestly for popular support for the undertaking. It is from every point of view desirable that a representative collection of the treasures of Indian art, ancient and modern, should be brought together in one place. And whether or not Delhi is justly described as "the very heart of India", it is no doubt logical to locate a National Art Gallery at the seat of Government.

But where such an institution shall be is of far less moment than are the ideals with which it is launched and maintained. Unless national unity is firmly held as the dominant aim, there is a positive danger, as the plans outlined in *Roopa-Lekha* show, that provincialism, shut out at the door, may come in through the window. For it is proposed to build, around the Main Hall, "Provincial galleries representing exclusively the art forms peculiar to each of the Provinces of India, including the States". Imagine an art gallery in the U. S. A. divided into a Massachusetts Room, a Texas Room, a Wisconsin Room, etc! Why not a separate room for each city and a different corner for each section of each city? Already a donation of from twelve to fourteen thousand rupees to cover the cost of the Bengal Wing is announced. We do not doubt the donor's generous spirit, but we are con-

vinced that interprovincial as well as intercommunal rivalry, in art or in anything else, is irreconcilable with the Nation's highest interests, where it is not positively subversive. If divisions there must be, let them be along the lines of periods or of media of artistic expression. Let us not squander the great contribution which it is possible for a National Gallery of Art to make to national cultural unity by extending the provincial lines of cleavage in a new direction!

The spirit that is needed by the Gallery's sponsors and by us all is that ascribed by Shri Mahadev Desai to Shri Nanda Lal Bose. He wrote in *Harijan*, nearly three years ago, replying to adverse criticism prompted by sectional pride and directed against the selection of the great Bengal artist for an important post in connection with a session of the Indian National Congress in Gujarat :—

> Nandababu is not a Bengal artist, he is an Indian artist, and he would go to the ends of India to lay the flower of his art at the feet of Mother India.

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Such gatherings of scholars as the East-West Philosophers' Conference held last summer at the University of Hawaii, reported in the February issue of the *Oriental Institute Journal* of that University, have great possibilities for promoting better understanding between East and West and for bringing out that which is fundamental to the thought of both. "*Du choc des opinions jaillit la vérité.*" The disenthrallment of human thought, the elimination of superstitions and the discovery of truth are all promoted by free and open discussion.

An East-West Philosophers' Conference with no Indian among the conferees seems rather like *Hamlet* with the Prince of Denmark omitted from the cast, but India's philosophies were sympathetically and, on the whole, understandingly considered. The emphasis, in fact, was on Eastern philosophies throughout, though the conferees' familiarity with Western philosophical systems was assumed. Two distinguished contributors to THE ARYAN PATH were among the American participants—Dr. George P. Conger of the University of Minnesota and Dr. F. S. C. Northrop of Yale University.

A significant feature of the work of the Conference was its challenge of the Western orthodox misinterpretation of several aspects of Eastern philosophy, *e.g.*, the latter's concept of ultimate reality, its evaluation of the individual and its rejection of logic as the source of ultimate validity. As the Chairman of the Conference, Dr. Charles A. Moore of the University of Hawaii, remarks in this Report, "It is obvious that one cannot evaluate a theory properly by assuming that one's own point of view is correct."

The Report emphasizes that the West would profit by giving more attention in its universities to the philosophical and ethical systems of the East. Many important philosophical texts are not yet available in any European language, "so that the West has 'hardly scratched the surface' in its study of the full richness of Oriental philosophy".

> Much of this philosophy is highly significant for the West. Many of its ideas and attitudes are distinctively Oriental. Among the probable contributions of the East worthy of serious study might be mentioned: the concept of Indeterminate Reality; real monism; more direct interest in and effort to solve human problems by the means of philosophy; the validity of intuition and criticism of strictly logical reasoning as exclusively valid; the attitude of kinship of man and nature; the challenge to individualism; the philosophy of simplicity, contentment, renunciation, passivity—when properly understood. Here, too, are mentioned only a few of the many interesting and valuable offerings of the East.

The Conference brought out also the more direct relationship in the East "between the great philosophies and the actual modes of living by the peoples, as contrasted with what has been called the 'academic' interest of Western philosophy, detached from everyday life".

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Economists agree that a nation is not in a sound position when its imports of goods too far exceed its exports. The

same is true in the sphere of ideas. India's balance of trade in intangibles has been unfavourable for centuries, owing to lack of effective demand for what Indian tradition can supply. The world is the chief loser, but not the only one. For India herself the condition is unhealthy, comparable to the effect of "dumping" one country's surplus in the markets of another, with resulting disorganisation of prices and depression of indigenous industry.

For generations the financially favoured youth of India have trekked to the universities of Europe and America to return laden with intellectual spoils and deeply imbued with Western ideology. Would it ever occur to a European to send his son to India to school? How many, even among resident Europeans, would consider an Indian university for their children? The education obtainable at Indian seats of learning is undeservedly misprized, but over and above the formal schooling available here, India's hoary culture has much to offer to the serious student. It is with pleasure therefore that we learn from *The Calcutta Review* for March of the offer of Shri Ranajit Palchaudhuri of Mahesganj Estate, Nadia, which the University of Calcutta has gratefully accepted, to establish a fellowship open to foreign scholars desirous of studying the Hindu civilization and culture in their setting. Too much cannot be augured from one such fellowship, but, while a drop of rain does not make the monsoon, it may presage it. The Bipradas Palchaudhuri Fellowship may well inspire emulation by other philanthropists who will thereby help India to fulfil her cultural mission.

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The battle of ideas is the only justifiable contest between men or nations. Armed conflict may or may not figure in that battle; if it does, it is wholly ancillary. Wars of vast moment may be fought and won without a blow struck or a drop of blood shed. And, on the other hand, a clash of armies, sharp or long-drawn-out, precipitated by economic rivalry or by territorial ambitions, may determine nothing. Unless, in fact, a war is fought over a moral issue it is no better than a street brawl or a raid by a robber gang. If a moral issue be involved, though might may seem to triumph over right, the battle of minds goes on, unaffected by peace treaties, and with all the weight of Nature behind the effort to restore the harmony which is justice.

Archibald MacLeish, writing on "The Art of the Good Neighbour" in the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Number of the New York *Nation* (10th February 1940), challenges the old fiction that the great division which splits the world is between the "Have's" and the "Have Not's", insisting that it is a cultural division. In the unarmed contest for hegemony in South America, for example, he sees the cultural as more decisive than the economic issue.

> In a divided world in which the real issue of division is the cultural issue, cultural relations are not irrelevancies. They are everything. And in such a world a cultural defeat is a defeat on the one front on which defeat cannot be accepted.... Unless the civilization which rests upon free institutions and personal liberty can justify itself *by its works* in those areas in which it is pressed by a competing order, it will not justify itself by other means.

But the criteria of any culture are not only its achievements in the arts and sciences, in the world of thought, religion and philosophy and in the conquest of material nature. A culture must be judged in the last analysis by the ideals and the ethical practice of its products, by the value which they set on justice and on freedom and by their ability to differentiate in action between liberty and license. India's cultural heritage is nonpareil, but it is for her sons to-day to prove its worth to the world, not only by their cultural achievements but by their lives as well.

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In moving in the world of thought, no less than in the visible world, it is above everything important to get the direction straight, for if one starts off in the wrong direction, however far he

may travel, he will never reach his goal. Without making clear the fundamental premises, no one can arrive at correct conclusions.

When Robert Hamilton prefaces his analysis of "The Nature of Religion" in *The Adelphi* for March with the statement that "Religion is concerned with man in his relation to ultimate and eternal things", he reveals the unstable foundation on which his argument is to be reared. An Eastern metaphysician, convinced of the utter incomprehensibility of ultimate Reality, would make short work of this, as he would also of Mr. Hamilton's argument that "Religion is the supreme emotion wherein all emotions are synthesized". The emotional constituents of religion he describes as awe, personalisation, sacrifice, immortality and freedom, each of which he proceeds to analyse into "pure rational-objective concepts".

His argument shows some rather fuzzy and superficial thinking, notably in his attempt to justify as "fundamental to all religion" the personalisation of the object of awe and in his inclusion as another indispensable constituent of religion the "emotion" of sacrifice or propitiation.

How much grander is the ancient concept of religion, as the silent worship of abstract Nature, the only divine manifestation, indistinct and inseparable from the Deity itself, the one unseen Spirit of Nature, the ray of which every man feels within himself. Religion includes the possibility, in rare moments of ecstatic bliss, of the mingling of that ray with the universal essence, its origin and centre—an experience which is the goal of every true mystic of whatever religion—but such an experience not only transcends emotion as the glory of a thousand suns transcends the flame of a match, but also differs utterly from emotion in kind, involving an altogether different part of the nature of man. Religion leads to the knowledge of the intimate union of all men and all things in the entire universe, and hence to the recognition of Universal Brotherhood and to the effort to act in unison with that spirit of God of which the body is the temple.

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Dreams are of great importance for the proof they give that there is that in man which goes on independently when the consciousness is no longer functioning through its physical body, something which bridges the gap of sleep, as by analogy it may be understood as bridging the gap of death.

Oneiromancy has fascinated man from the earliest times. It is not surprising that, as brought out in Joseph de Somogyi's "The Interpretation of Dreams in Ad-Damīrī's *Ḥayat Al-Ḥayawān*" in the just received January issue of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, dream interpretation, *ta'bir*, developed into an important branch of Muslim science. Ad-Damīrī devoted a chapter of his zoological encyclopædia to it, with sub-chapters on the meaning of animals seen in dreams. He drew upon Greek as well as Arabic sources. This article groups his explanations under several different methods of interpretation, as the symbolical, the etymological, the Qur'anic etc.

Many of his interpretations seem arbitrary and inconsequent; sometimes the association of ideas is thought-provoking, as when a hawk stands for "somebody belonging to the ruling class" and a chameleon for the "king's minister"; sometimes amusing, as when a turtle-dove means either a "despised stranger" or a "sincere woman" and a hornet either "a highwayman", "an architect" or a "bad musician".

There may be valuable lessons for the dreamer in what he brings through into waking consciousness—inspiration, intuitions, warnings and, in the case of undesirable dreams, an indication of his weaknesses, but if, as seems indicated by all the evidence, dreams are subjective experiences, high or low according to the level on which the dreamer's consciousness is functioning, how can a formal set of symbols hold true for all dreams? The Supplement on Dreams in our January issue brought out clearly the essentially individual nature of the dream

experience. How, then, can any man interpret the dream of another, unless the interpreter be a psychic sensitive with a power of reading the future that is quite independent of the particular dream? The range of possible meanings given for many of these symbols would allow considerable scope for such a power.

Dreams demonstrably depend upon the quality of waking thoughts; over the former one's control is indirect, over the latter absolute. So it would seem to be the part of wisdom to put one's chief attention on the waking dreams, the aspirations which, if encouraged, will not fade away like the dreams of the night but grow stronger and stronger until dreams during sleep fall into line with them and one's whole life becomes the expression and outward proof of the divine motive within.

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The late American Orientalist Arthur W. Ryder formulated a profound truth when he wrote in his recently published *Original Poems together with Translations from the Sanskrit* :—

> And thus they always kill at length
> The thing they organize;
> The more the body gathers strength
> The more the spirit dies.

This has been true in varying degrees of all the world's religions. But there are subtler foes to truth than institutional crystallization and to their number belong many philologists and Orientalists. Sacerdotalism hides the original teachings of a great prophet and reformer by plastering them over with dogmas and rites, but the accretions can be cleared away by any one who makes the effort, as exemplified in the case of Dr. Ryder. The Orientalists or the "higher critics", however, who bore through the teachings in their purely intellectual efforts to pierce to their original meaning are often as destructive as so many white ants. For the majority depend on their translations for their very knowledge of the teachings themselves. If they proclaim that the meaning is thus and so, the many who believe in the verbal inspiration of modern savants bow to their astuteness and help to spread their quite erroneous views.

As Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy puts it in his article, "The Reinterpretation of Buddhism" in the lately published December issue of the *New Indian Antiquary*, the scholar is "rarely concerned with the truth but only with the fact of what was taught"—say, rather, with the surface meaning of the latter. Thus, as he brings out, Buddhist teachings have been assumed to differ far more radically than they do from the earlier Indian tradition, of which we may call them a popularization. The Buddha, Dr. Coomaraswamy asserts, had no doctrinal opinions of his own. No great teacher, in fact, has ever been original.

> Our democratic attachment to opinionative licence has made us overlook that there can be only one *true* philosophy.

Referring to the implication of two different "selves" in the Buddha's teaching, as elsewhere, he writes :—

> There is another self that can be known in another way than that of the psychologist, and the purpose of the doctrine is to enable man to shift his consciousness of being from the former to the latter self, from the changeable and perishable ego of the man who thinks of himself as So-and-so to an immortal self that can no more than God himself...be named or defined....It is only inasmuch as our consciousness of being (far more authentic than our awareness of being So-and-so) can be shifted from the lesser to the greater "self"...that there can be any liberation or immortality.

The whole of Dr. Coomaraswamy's article brings out the truth once again that the Buddha did teach the existence of the Higher or Spiritual Self in man.

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A melancholy interest attaches to the article in the latest issue of *The Eastern Buddhist* on "The Songs of Shinrān Shōnin" by Mrs. Beatrice Lane Suzuki, co-editor of that periodical and, like her distinguished husband, Dr. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, a valued contributor to THE ARYAN PATH, because the same issue brings the news of her death. She was a convinced devotee of the Buddhist sect which she describes in this last article, Shingon or Shin.

The latter stresses an important aspect of Buddhist teaching, though it would

seem at the cost of largely ignoring the Buddha's emphasis on self-reliance and on right behaviour. Shinrān Shōnin was a Buddhist saint of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries who developed still farther than his predecessors had done the Shin doctrine of salvation by faith in Amida. Amida or Amitâbha (the Sanskrit Amrita Buddha, the "Immortal Enlightened") is defined by Mrs. Suzuki as "Infinite Light".

> Wherever we see beauty, holiness, compassion or love manifested in this world of ignorance and illusion, we can know that it is because Amida's light is shining.

The ideal of an impersonal divine light became anthropomorphized in time. Amitâbha means also the eternal divine prototype of the Buddhas who appear from time to time on earth.

Blind belief in any person or in any teaching, *i.e.*, faith on authority, never saved any one. Such faith is a mental disease. But faith based on strict logic and reason, faith on the evidence of spiritual intuition, is a different matter. Such faith, added to will, is irresistible in its potency. And what faith commends itself more to the reason as well as to the intuition than that in the perfectibility of man and in some having attained the goal of human evolution?

The "salvation" sought by the Shin follower is not selfish release, at however high a level of consciousness. Shinrān proclaims :—

> Those who reach the Land of Purity and Happiness,
> When they return to this world of five defilements,
> Like Buddha Shakamuni work without cessation
> For the welfare of all beings.

In other words, the Pure Land, as Mrs. Suzuki explains, is conceived "not only as a land of happiness and peace but as a field of enlightenment for the practice of *gensō ekō* ('returning to this world') in order to help sentient beings".

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Considerateness is a grossly underrated virtue. Its importance is brought out in an "Open Letter to the Reading Public" (*The Saturday Review of Literature*, January 20, 1940), in which a well-known novelist, safe behind anonymity, pleads on behalf of her class for a fair chance for the famous to live their lives and do their work as normal human beings.

"Thou shalt not steal" is one of the Buddha's "Five Don't's" as well as the eighth commandment in the Mosaic decalogue. It is far too narrowly interpreted. Many who would starve before they would put their hand in a neighbour's pocket feel no compunction at stealing a famous stranger's time and energy and at robbing the world thereby of his potential best. The novelist of note, for instance, though the same applies to any public man, becomes the target of a hail of letters making demands, requesting help, requiring answers; the recipient of unnecessary telephone calls without number; the host of a stream of callers, many without appointments.

It is not so much crass selfishness as thoughtlessness that is responsible. Each thinks only of his own wish to meet a celebrity, to lionize him socially, to enlist the famous man's support for a pet charity and so on, forgetting what the multiplication of such innocent demands may total.

The writer of the "Open Letter" recognizes that it is not desirable to run away from the world. But the obligation is not all on one side. The thoughtless public should practise some self-discipline and refrain from forcing themselves, in season and out of season, upon the creative artist or the original thinker. The latter requires privacy to turn within from time to time, to draw his inspiration from the deeper springs of his own consciousness, to formulate the results of his own observations; and he should have the hours that he needs, free from interruption, to get on with his work. The cost of denying that modest demand may be high. Creative output suffers not only in quantity but usually in quality also if it must be done by snatches. If the victim of public assaults is deservedly famous, world culture is the loser.